

U.S., UAE liberate seized islands in mock battles

AL-HAMRA, United Arab Emirates (R) — U.S. and Gulf Arab forces, in mock battles using live fire, stormed ashore on Wednesday and "liberated" seized territory. Any similarity to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was purely coincidental, military officers said. "Today's exercise is not to defend the island but attack it to regain control after enemy troops seized it on January 1," said an officer of the United Arab Emirates. U.S. officers stressed there was no parallel with Abu Musa and greater and lesser Tumb islands. "This exercise has nothing to do with any real world situation," Vice Admiral Scott Redd, commander of U.S. naval forces Central Command, told Reuters. A UAE official source said Iran, which controls the three islands, provoked the UAE by building an airport on Abu Musa, with plans to construct related buildings.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي

ANNOUNCEMENT

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King accorded warm welcome in Israel

'We want peace for the entire region'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein was received very warmly and enthusiastically during a one-day visit to Israel Wednesday.

Israel radio stations played songs in Arabic, and hundreds of Israelis lined the streets of Tel Aviv to greet the King. The King's first visit to Israel's cultural and commercial capital coincided with Secretary of State Warren Christopher's return to the region to promote peace talks between Israel and Syria.

The King said he hoped for peace "not only between our two countries and peoples, but hopefully for this entire region in the very nearest possible future."

Prime Minister Shimon Peres said that "by the end of the century, which is a matter of another four years, I do believe the Middle East can reach a comprehensive full peace."

Mr. Peres said there was "enough room here" for Syria's President Hafez Assad.

"We are trying our utmost

so that we can bring before our people a proposal for peace with Syria," Mr. Peres said.

King Hussein, co-piloting a Jordanian army helicopter, was greeted at Sdeh Dov, Tel Aviv's municipal airport, by Mr. Peres and parliament Speaker Shevach Weiss.

Four F-15 fighter planes flew overhead as the beaming King walked down a red carpet, inspected an Israeli honour guard and shook hands with leaders of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities in Israel.

An Israeli army band played the Jordanian and Israeli national anthems.

King Hussein and Mr. Peres drove together in a motorcade from Sdeh Dov, a small airfield in Tel Aviv, to Ichilov hospital, where former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, critically wounded by an assassin, died on the operating table on Nov. 4.

Mr. Rabin and King Hussein signed the historic peace treaty between the two countries in October 1994.

At the hospital, the King was greeted by Mr. Rabin's

widow Leah, who presented the King with a medal commemorating her slain husband.

"I know how much this would have meant to Yitzhak, and how happy he would have been to receive and welcome you here," she said. "Thank you, Your Majesty. Your presence amongst us is a living memorial to what you and Yitzhak built."

The King also visited a Jordanian Air Force pilot injured in a training accident and a Jordanian soldier injured in Bosnia who are being treated at the hospital.

The five-kilometre route from the airfield to the hospital was lined with hundreds of spectators and police. Israeli and Jordanian flags flew, and a huge banner in Hebrew and Arabic said "Tel Aviv-Jaffa welcomes His Majesty King Hussein."

Some 6,000 police officers were on duty in the largest security operation in the city's history.

King Hussein is hugely popular here, seen by many Israelis as the Arab leader

most supportive of warm relations with Israel.

The coldness of relations with Egypt, the first Arab country to make peace with the Jewish state, is a sore point for Israel, and Israeli officials have insisted that peace with Syria be different.

"This is what peace looks like," said government spokesman Uri Dromi, standing among the crowd that greeted King Hussein at the hospital. "I hope the Syrians will be impressed."

Mr. Dromi said it was significant the King chose to come to Tel Aviv. "The city symbolises modern Israel," he said. "The fact that he is coming to Tel Aviv means he is reaching straight out to the people of Israel."

It was the King's third public visit to Israel since the two countries signed a peace agreement in October 1994. In November 1994, the King and Mr. Rabin exchanged copies of the ratified peace agreement at a resort on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. On Nov. 6, the King attended Mr. Rabin's funeral in Jerusalem.

The King also received long applause at a ceremony to inaugurate a trauma centre dedicated to Mr. Rabin at Ichilov hospital.

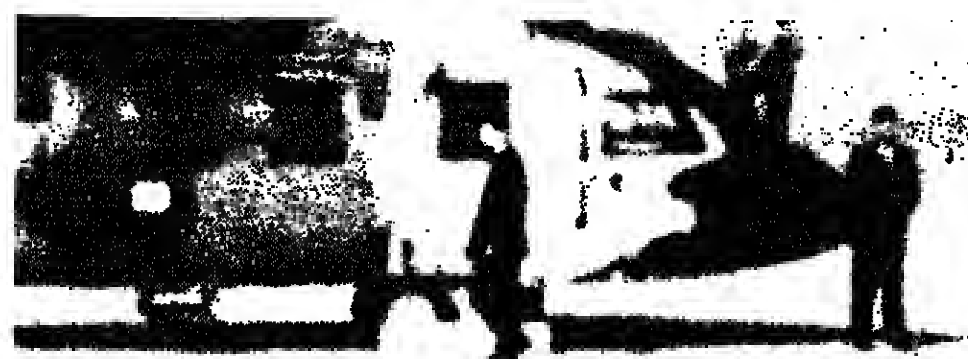
"I cannot remember the last time that Israel waited with such warm anticipation," for a visit by a foreign leader, Mr. Peres said, recalling the King's emotional words at the funeral of Mr. Rabin.

"Never shall the people of Israel forget your words of chivalry," he told the King, who was accompanied by Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Ben Shaker and other Jordanian ministers.

King Hussein said: "I would like to say how happy we are to have the opportunity to be with our friends, our partners in building and laying the foundations of a comprehensive peace in this region. It is indeed a pleasure."

Later on the day the King, Mr. Peres and Mr. Christopher took part in a ceremony honouring "those who have contributed to the cause

(Continued on page 7)



His Majesty King Hussein, flanked by Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres (right) and Knesset Speaker Shevach Weiss, arrives in Tel Aviv yesterday for a one-day visit that also included a trip to Beit Gibril on Lake Tiberias (AFP photo)

Palestinians detain elections activist

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Palestinian security forces in the West Bank have arrested the campaign manager of a small opposition party running in self-rule elections this month, party officials said Wednesday. Thani Badah, campaign manager for the People's Party (formerly Communist) in Salbit, south of the city of Nablus, was arrested Monday in Salbit by the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) intelligence forces, said Basam Salhi, a party candidate in Ramallah. "We have not been given a reason for his arrest, but we believe it is political. We feel this is interference in the elections," Mr. Salhi said. Palestinian intelligence officials confirmed Mr. Badah was being detained, but declined to give details of where he is being held, citing "security reasons."

King Hassan meets Arab League chief

MARRAKESH, Morocco (R) — King Hassan of Morocco met Wednesday with Esmat Meguid, secretary general of the Arab League in the southern city of Marrakesh, an official said. "His Majesty received the Arab League chief behind closed doors for nearly an hour," a Moroccan official said. He gave no details. Dr. Abdul Meguid, who arrived in Morocco on Monday, is attending a three-day conference in Casablanca on "security in the Arab World." The conference is jointly organised by European and Arab institutions. Dr. Abdul Meguid is expected to leave Morocco for Tunis on Thursday, officials added.

Iran to execute five on spying charges

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Iran's supreme court has upheld death sentences handed to five men convicted of spying for the United States or Iraq, the Islamic Republic news agency reported Saturday. The state-run agency, monitored in Cyprus, said three of the men were arrested in 1992 and later found guilty of spying for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. It said Kazem Tabrizi, Jafar Khatibi and Mohammad Abbaszadeh sold information to the CIA.

U.S. presses for Syrian-Israeli deal

TEL AVIV (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher vowed at the start of a peace shuttle here Wednesday to intensify efforts to find a breakthrough in Israeli-Syrian talks before American and Israeli elections.

Mr. Christopher said after meeting Prime Minister Shimon Peres: "We are at a critical moment in the negotiations."

He said two recent rounds of peace negotiations held outside Washington had led to a "much more meaningful dialogue" where the two sides began "to study trade-offs" for the first time, in an apparent reference to a possible land-for-peace deal involving an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Mr. Christopher acknowledged that "there are very serious gaps" remaining between Israel and Syria but added: "I arrived here in a hopeful frame of mind."

"Our objective is... to end Israel's conflict not just with Syria but with all of her Arab neighbours," he told a press conference.

When asked if Israeli general elections scheduled for October and U.S. presidential polls in November would have an impact on the negotiations, he said: "1996 has its electoral timetable, which inevitably requires intensification, acceleration of the process."

"We are going to intensify our efforts to ensure that Israel achieves peace with security," he said, declining however to give details of any new proposals. For his part Mr. Peres said the revived peace talks at the Wye Plantation between Dec. 27 and Jan. 5 were "a highly successful encounter" that "initiated a new spirit" between the two sides.

When asked how many rounds of talks may be needed to strike a peace deal, Mr. Peres replied: "This is not an instant coffee that you can have in just one round."

In Damascus, a Western diplomat said Mr. Christopher would seek a com-

mitment from Syria and Israel for an agenda for future rounds of peace talks, with the next starting on Jan. 21.

Syrian state radio, meanwhile, shared Mr. Christopher's optimism over the prospects for his 16th Middle East peace mission.

"The Americans' determination to make a breakthrough towards a comprehensive peace and the language used by Israel since Prime Minister Peres came to power can only lead to optimism," the radio said in a commentary.

"Christopher's current tour incites optimism because it is taking place in a more favourable atmosphere following the Syrian-Israeli talks in Maryland," it added.

Syria's official newspapers said they expected Mr. Christopher to bring new ideas to "bridge gaps" that still exist.

During his last visit to the region Mr. Christopher brokered the resumption of Israeli-Syrian talks near Washington after a six-month break, and both sides have spoken of a positive atmosphere for further contacts.

The main subject to be tackled in future talks is the Golan Heights, which Israel captured in 1967 and whose return Syria demands as part of any peace deal.

Mr. Christopher was due to hold talks here Thursday with Foreign Minister Ehud Barak before meeting Friday in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez Assad and possibly repeating the shuttle over the weekend.

He said on the flight to Tel Aviv that the U.S. mediating role was "indispensable" to the peace process but cautioned against any expectations of quick results or a meeting between the Israeli and Syrian foreign ministers.

There were two further boosts to Middle East peace on Wednesday with the first official visit to Tel Aviv by King Hussein, and the release of a new wave of 1,200 Palestinian prisoners by the Jewish state.

Israel frees Palestinian prisoners

NAHAL OZ, Gaza Strip (AFP) — Israel released hundreds of Palestinians from its jails on Wednesday but sparked widespread complaints that most were non-political detainees who had already completed their sentences.

Israeli authorities were due to free 1,200 Palestinians Wednesday and Thursday under the terms of peace agreements with Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority, 10 days ahead of historic self-rule elections.

The inmates were released in small batches from prisons around Israel and were taken to Palestinian-controlled areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

A first group of 209 freed detainees arrived early in the afternoon at the Nahal Oz crossing point into the Gaza Strip. They included a number of militants from the radical Islamic movements Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but 150 of them were serving short sentences simply for working in Israel without proper authorisation.

Ahmad Al Kachar complained that in the military detention camp of Ketziot where he had been held, "out of the 1,200 inmates from Gaza, only 25 were released."

The mother of another Hamas prisoner, Maher Al Azza, said: "They said they would free Hamas inmates but I don't see any. All the names they gave were false."

"If they want elections, they have to free everyone," Another 234 prisoners were taken to the West Bank town of Ramallah, most of them illegal workers and a few political detainees who had virtually finished their prison terms.

About 20 of the men from Israel's Megiddo prison were presented to a cheering crowd at a campaign rally for candidates from Mr. Arafat's Fateh movement in the Jan. 20 election to a Palestinian self-rule council.

"Welcome to the heroic liberators" crooned an announcer as the 20 climbed up on stage, some still carrying their prison luggage. "I feel a mixture of joy and sadness," said Maamoun Yassin, 28, who had served his seven-month term for Hamas activities. "I am happy to see my family and friends, but too many are still behind bars," he said.

The future of an estimated 4,000-5,000 Palestinians still in Israeli jails has emerged as one of the most emotional issues of the election campaign, with opposition candidates critical of Mr. Arafat's

failure to gain their release.

Israel on the other hand uses security arguments for justifying the continued detention of Palestinian militants, many jailed for anti-Israeli violence.

Those freed Wednesday were required to sign pledges promising not to engage in political violence.

Another 150 prisoners were taken to the southern West Bank city of Hebron, where 50 common criminals were immediately locked up again in a Palestinian-run prison in Dahiya.

The prisoner releases are carried out under the terms of a September 1995 agreement between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority.

Under the accord, 1,000 prisoners were set to go shortly after the agreement was signed and the 1,200 being freed in two waves Wednesday and Thursday and were to be released before next week's vote.

The rest are not to be released before the start of "final status" talks on the future of the Palestinian territories due to begin in May. In all, about 400 militants from the Palestinian opposition were to be among those released this week.

Saud Al Faisal ends landmark visit

AMMAN (Agencies) — Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal left Amman on Wednesday after the most important visit to Jordan by a Saudi official since the countries split during the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

Prince Saud had a working breakfast with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Bin Shaker at the house of Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, who played a leading role in the reconciliation effort between the two countries over the past year. The prince later left Amman for Riyadh.

Officials from both sides said talks helped lay a solid basis for future ties after they were badly damaged by Jordan's perceived support for Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Prince Saud met His Majesty King Hussein shortly after he arrived on Tuesday and gave him a letter from King Fahd. He said afterwards King Hussein was welcome to visit Saudi Arabia when his time allowed. Officials and diplomats said no

date was fixed. A meeting between the two monarchs planned for early December to formally seal the rapprochement was postponed after King Fahd suffered a stroke.

King Fahd handed the running of the government to his brother Crown Prince Abdullah last week. The monarch, who did not abdicate, said he needed rest.

Talks during Prince Saud's 25-hour visit also covered Iraq and Arab-Israeli peace moves.

"The Saudis showed keen interest in knowing more details about our stand vis-a-vis Iraq," a Jordanian official said.

Prince Saud did not say if Riyadh supported Jordan's call for an Arab meeting to discuss the situation in Iraq, but in public remarks he blamed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for the suffering of his people.

Jordan has been calling for asylum in Iraq since it gave asylum to top Iraqi defectors in August.

Yemen says no to observers on Hanish

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen rejected Wednesday an Eritrean proposal for the deployment of international observers on a strategic Red Sea island at the centre of a conflict between the two countries.

Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Iryani told a press conference "we categorically reject any internationalisation" of the conflict over the island of Hanish Al Kabir.

He added that his country would not "for the moment" resort to war to win back the island, which Eritrean troops seized on Dec. 18 after a three-day battle.

Hanish Al Kabir is part of a group of nine islands claimed by both countries which guard access to busy shipping lanes in the Bab Al Mandab straits between the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Yemen demands an Eritrean withdrawal from Hanish Al Kabir before opening negotiations to resolve the conflict, while Eritrea wants both sides to pull out of the

whole archipelago with guarantees that Yemen will not redeploy there.

Asmara has also asked for international arbitration to settle the dispute.

Mr. Iryani said Eritrea was able to capture Hanish Al Kabir because the Yemeni navy had not yet recovered from the effects of the country's 1994 civil war.

Twelve Eritreans and 20 Yemenis died in the battle for the island, Eritrean Interior Minister Ali Sayeed Abdullah said in remarks published Wednesday.

Mr. Abdullah is on a tour of Gulf Arab states to outline Asmara's position in the conflict.

Meanwhile, Mr. Iryani said mediation efforts by Ethiopia among others had stumbled over the fact that for Yemen the conflict was over Hanish Al Kabir alone, while Eritrea wanted to discuss sovereignty of the whole archipelago.

The ownership of the islands has never been fixed by international convention.

Turk journalist beaten to death

ISTANBUL (R) — A Turkish journalist found dead after witnesses said he was detained by police died from brain hemorrhage brought on by beatings to the head, according to the official autopsy report.

The report, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters on Wednesday, said 27-year-old Metin Goktepe had "traumatic blows to the head." One of his ribs was also broken.

Mr. Goktepe was found dead on Monday night after witnesses, including two journalists from mainstream newspapers, said he was detained by police while covering the funeral in Istanbul of two militant leftists killed during a prison clash last week.

The left-wing Evrensel daily, for which Mr. Goktepe worked, and human rights

lawyers investigating the death have accused police of beating Mr. Goktepe to death.

The interior ministry has ordered two of its chief inspectors to carry out an investigation into the death, the Anatolian news agency said.

According to the autopsy report, Mr. Goktepe was "found dead in the sports complex in the Istanbul district of Eyup."

But police on Wednesday said Mr. Goktepe was not among scores of people picked up during the funeral and brought to the Eyup gymnasium — which is within the sports complex — for an identity check.

"He was never in the gymnasium because all the detainees there were videotaped... He was not on the videotape," police spokesman Tayfun Bora told Reuters.

Mr. Goktepe's death brought calls of outrage from journalist organisations and human rights groups in Turkey, which accused police of stepping up attacks on journalists.

Human rights monitors say torture is rampant in Turkish police stations, something Turkish officials deny.

Last August, a Kurdish journalist died while in police detention in southeast Turkey, where Kurdish rebels are battling for self-rule. Police said he committed suicide, but his family said he died from torture.

The independent Human Rights Foundation of Turkey says that in 1994, the latest year for which exact figures were available, 32 people died from torture or "suspicious circumstances" while in Turkish police custody.

Ex-Israeli navy commander will become new Shin Bet chief

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli media defied military censors on Wednesday by publishing the name of the new head of the Shin Bet, the secret service disgraced by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination.

Security sources confirmed Rear Admiral Ami Ayalon, 50, Israel's navy commander until his retirement 10 days ago, was Prime Minister Shimon Peres's choice to replace the Shin Bet chief who quit on Monday over the assassination.

Israel's cabinet was due to approve the appointment on Sunday. The previous chief was known only by the Hebrew initial "Kaf". His full name, like that of his predecessors, is regarded

as a state secret.

"The period in which this organisation worked in the twilight zone has passed," said Hanoch Marmari, editor-in-chief of the newspaper Haaretz which published Mr. Ayalon's name. "There is a public interest. From a public standpoint the situation is that even if the organisation must be secret and its people unidentified, the head of the organisation must be disclosed," Mr. Marmari told Reuters.

Mr. Ayalon, with 32 years of navy service, had been mentioned as one of several possible successors during weeks of Israeli media speculation.

"We would have felt stupid to announce an appointment and at the

same time suddenly drop one name off the list," said Mr. Marmari, whose paper was among at least three dailies to publish the name. Two others did not.

Military commentators said by appointing a Shin Bet outsider known for keeping secrets and staying out of the news, Mr. Peres hoped to polish up the agency's tarnished reputation. The agency, set up with the founding of the state, has the twin aims of fighting hostile activity and protecting leaders.

In 3-1/2 years as navy commander, Mr. Ayalon briefed military correspondents only once. His life's motto may well be what he once told the army magazine Bamahane: "We are not in the headlines —

that's testimony to our success."

Mr. Ayalon previously turned down the job when offered it by Mr. Rabin, gunned down on Nov. 4 by Yigal Amir, a 25-year-old Israeli opposed to government peace moves.

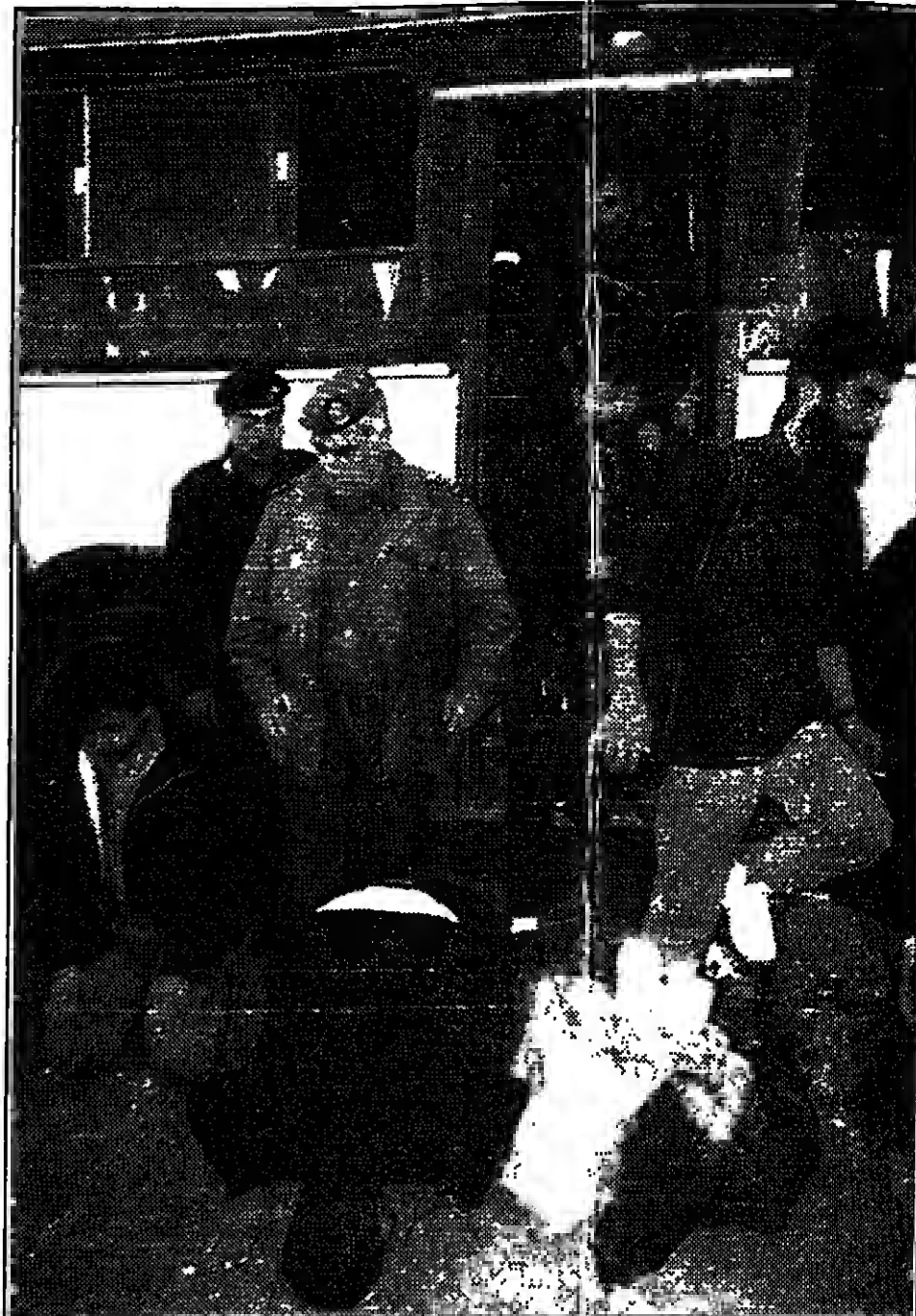
Kaf quit on Monday, three days after Israel's most wanted Palestinian bomber, Yahya Ayyash, was blown up by an explosives-packed cellular telephone at his hideout in the self-ruled Gaza Strip.

Israel officially declined to confirm or deny carrying out the killing. But security sources said Kaf held off his resignation until after the Mr. Ayyash operation so he could leave on a high note for the agency.

The sources said Kaf's feeling that he was not being dealt with fairly by a state inquiry into security lapses in the assassination was a main factor in his decision to resign.

Since the Rabin assassination, the Shin Bet has stepped up security around Mr. Peres, who succeeded Mr. Rabin, and around other government leaders to a degree unprecedented in Israel.

Entire streets are now closed off whenever Mr. Peres sets out in a motorcade. At one ground-floor hotel function, his armoured car drove him straight into the banquet hall.



PALESTINIAN PRISONERS FREED: Palestinian policemen watch Wednesday as several Palestinian prisoners bow in prayers as they and others leave a bus after being freed by Israel. Israel freed hundreds of Palestinians held in its prisons as agreed under the Oslo terms prior to the Palestinian elections (Reuters photo)

Diplomatic manoeuvres over Afghan war stepped up

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Diplomatic leaders took advantage of the winter lull in the Afghan civil war to step up peace initiatives, with Pakistan and Iran holding high-level talks and the United Nations reviving its own stalled mission.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati met Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Wednesday after flying in for a surprise visit said to be focussing on the Afghan conflict.

Officials said the meeting lasted 30 minutes, but no details were given. They said Mr. Velayati would also call on President Farooq Ahmad Leghari and hold talks with Foreign Minister Asef Ahmad Ali.

U.N. Special Envoy Mahmoud Mestiri is due in Islamabad on Friday to resume his mission to bring peace to Afghanistan where a civil war has been raging since the fall of the communist regime in April 1992.

His spokesman said the U.N. envoy would spell out his plan of action on arrival. Mr. Mestiri left Islamabad in November to report to the

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali after the failure of his plan for the peaceful transfer of power of Kabul to a council of the warring factions and other Afghans.

Diplomatic and Afghan sources say differences between Pakistan and Iran over the Afghan problem have increased despite multiple consultations, topped by Bhutto's talks with Iranian leaders in Tehran in November.

Both countries publicly support a negotiated settlement and the formation of a broad-based Afghan government. But they appear to be at odds over the roles of the Kabul government and the Taliban Islamic militia in any future administration.

Tehran recognises the legitimacy of Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and is known to be wary of the Taliban, which it suspects is backed by Pakistan.

According to diplomatic sources, Iran wants a rapprochement between Mr. Rabbani and his rival four-party coalition in a move against the Taliban, and that "worries" Pakistan.

The recent shuttle di-

plomacy of Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alaeddin Boroujerdi, who met last month in Mazar-i-Sharif with Uzbek leader General Abdul Rashid Dostam, after talks with Mr. Rabbani in Kabul, has increased concerns in Islamabad.

Gen. Dostam's National Islamic Movement (NIM) is one of the key members of the four-party opposition alliance, along with former Afghan Premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami.

"The main purpose of Velayati's visit here seems to be to appease Pakistani concerns," one source said. Unconfirmed reports indicate that there had been a significant increase in Iranian material support to Mr. Rabbani, who is confronting a challenge from Taliban, who are entrenched on the outskirts of Kabul and have vowed to topple him.

They said about 20 Iranian flights with supplies had landed at the Bagram airbase near the Afghan capital when the Taliban were dangerously close to Kabul, after capturing Pul-i-Charik in November.

Report says Arab journalists face death, prison, censorship

CAIRO (AP) — Seventy-four Arab journalists have been killed in recent years in the Middle East, including 49 in Algeria alone, according to a report Wednesday.

The study by the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres, or Reporters Without Borders, said Arab journalists also were subjected to kidnapping, imprisonment and censorship.

"Arab countries, more than any other world region, suffer from a lack of press freedom," the report said. The death toll in Algeria, where Islamic extremists have targeted journalists in their three-year insurgency, was 49.

Elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa in the past two years, 25 journalists were killed "in the course of their work or simply because of their profession," it said.

It said the longest serving was Abdullah Al Darraj, arrested in 1973 in Libya "where it is simply impossible to find out what happens to journalists in jail."

Along among those in prison are eight journalists sentenced to life in Kuwait for collaborating with Iraq during Iraq's 1990-91 occupation "after a trial that paid no attention to the basic rules of law."

It added: "Most were jailed after trials that were neither fair nor impartial... with no defence worthy of the name. Others are being held without trial, having been given no explanation."

The group said it knew at least 10 journalists who have "disappeared" in Sudan and Algeria and blamed both governments and armed Muslim fundamentalist groups for their kidnappings.

"In many countries in the Arab World, censorship is either officially in force or unofficially used by the authorities," the report said. It specifically cited Algeria, the Palestinian National Authority and Egypt.

While all branches of the media are affected, the report said television, radio and news agencies were most tightly controlled.

Police arrest Jewish extremist who hailed Rabin's murder

TEL AVIV (AP) — Police arrested a Jewish extremist Wednesday for allegedly praising the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The suspect is also accused of participating in a ceremony cursing the slain leader before his death, a police spokesman said.

Avigdor Eskin, a member of the outlawed anti-Arab group Kach, was arrested early Wednesday at Ben Gurion international airport

just outside Tel Aviv.

Security sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Mr. Eskin was returning from Moscow, where he had been bidding since just after the Nov. 4 assassination.

Mr. Rabin was gunned down by a Jewish extremist as he left a peace rally in Tel Aviv. The confessed gunman said he killed the premier in the hopes of stopping the Israel-PLO peace process and prevent-

ing Israel from turning over land in the West Bank to the Palestinians.

Since the assassination, police have cracked down on those who publicly praised the slaying or took part in activities calling for Mr. Rabin's death before he was murdered.

Police spokesman Eric Bar-Chen said Mr. Eskin was being questioned by the National Serious Crimes Unit, which has banded suspects in Mr. Rabin's killing.

Qatar's new ruler consolidates power — diplomats

DOHA (R) — Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, who ousted his father as Qatar's absolute ruler in a bloodless palace coup in June, is unlikely to lose power from a challenge by the former emir, diplomatic sources said on Wednesday.

The struggle between 46-year-old Sheikh Hamad and his father Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, 63, has threatened to destabilise this Gulf Arab state where billions of dollars are being staked by foreign firms to develop huge offshore gas reserves.

The coup was sparked by a struggle in which Sheikh Khalifa attempted to recover powers and patronage that had been steadily secured and exercised by his eldest son since 1992.

Since then Sheikh Hamad has successfully consolidated his power amongst key members of Qatar's ruling Al Thani family and military and he shows no signs of handing control back to his father, diplomats said.

"There is no ground swell of support for Khalifa to come back... Hamad has the sup-

port of the ruling family and the military and even if he can come back his role will be titular," one said.

Diplomats say there is a generation split on the change in power in Qatar with the older generation largely sympathising with the more traditionalist Sheikh Khalifa and the younger generation enthusiastic about the prospects of reform under his son.

Qatar's population consists of 560,000 residents and 120,000 nationals. Sheikh Khalifa has refused to give up his right to govern Qatar and has vowed to return to power "whatever the cost".

He returned to the region last month after six months' exile in Europe and has been feted during a tour of Gulf Arab states. He has set up camp in the United Arab Emirates.

This has increased pressure on his son who fell out with his partners in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — and in particular regional powerhouse Saudi Arabia — at their annual summit in Muscat last month over how they make decisions.

But diplomats said that although Sheikh Khalifa had received respect and hospitality for his position from GCC states he may be wrong in seeing this as direct backing for return to power.

Sheikh Hamad has been able to win U.S. approval and is being strongly supported by Washington despite Doha's quarrel with Saudi Arabia and ties with Iraq, diplomats said.

U.S. oil firms are major partners in Qatar's multi-billion dollar liquefied natural gas projects which are scheduled to start exports between 1997 and 1999.

Qatar, which juts like a thumb into the Gulf from the northeastern shores of the Arabian peninsula, has the world's third-largest reserves of gas and produces more than 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil.

Its capital Doha is being used to preposition U.S. military equipment to deter Iraqi aggression in the Gulf.

"The Americans have quickly warmed to Sheikh Hamad... His promises of (municipal) elections and investment liberalisation go down well," said a diplomat who asked

not to be named.

But even with domestic and foreign political backing, Sheikh Hamad has not been able to stamp his authority on Qatar as quickly as he would have wished because of the country's cash shortage caused by the large debt it is carrying to finance its share of the gas projects.

Public expenditure is being curtailed to meet the financing of these projects, limiting the emir's ability to deepen loyalty in the ruling family and merchant classes, diplomats said.

"His Achilles heel may be the lack of cash he needs to spread round," one diplomat said.

Diplomats do not rule out the possibility of Sheikh Khalifa returning in the future as part of a reconciliation process under which he would act as a patriarchal figure with very limited state powers.

Public portraits of the deposed emir are still evident in government offices and hotels although the state-controlled press is under instruction not to print his photograph.

British defence secretary to visit Kuwait Saturday

KUWAIT (R) — British Defence Secretary Michael Portillo will visit Kuwait on Saturday to discuss defence issues with the Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah and other officials, the British embassy said on Wednesday.

Mr. Portillo will also meet Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah and Defence Minister Sheikh Ahmad Hamoud Al Jaber Al Sabah on his one-day trip, his first to the Gulf country since his appointment in July 1995.

Military sales account for a third of Britain's exports to Kuwait. An increase in

arms sales helped boost British exports to Kuwait by 53 per cent to \$323 million (\$510 million) in the first eight months of 1995 from the same period of 1994.

Its largest arms contract is for 250 GKN Defence Ltd warrior armoured cars worth £600 million (\$924 million).

Fifty-four British military advisers work with Kuwait's armed forces.

Mr. Portillo will also discuss bilateral relations in general and brief Kuwait on Britain's contribution to the NATO-led Implementation Force in Bosnia, an embassy statement said.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 773111-14

PROGRAMME TWO
13:00 Hurrahs
13:15 Fineman Sam
13:45 My Secret Identity
14:00 NBA
15:05 The New Leave it to Beaver
15:30
16:30 Adventures of the Old West
16:30 Gullie World Sport Special
17:00 Sophie Et Virginie
17:30
19:00 Le Monde Est A Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Magazine - Archimede
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Cartoons and Comics
20:00 Doc - Magazine III
20:15 The Album Show
21:10 The New Avengers
22:00 News in English
22:35
23:59 Feature film "North Beach and Back Home"
23:59 Series - Matlock

PRAYER TIMES
05:10 Fair
06:32 (Sunrise) Doha
11:43 Doha
14:31 As
16:54 Maghrib
18:18 Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swelfth, Tel. 810741

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624500
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 624400
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623441
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 824547
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675991
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER
Bulks supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Temperatures are expected to drop with skies partly cloudy. There will be a chance for scattered showers and winds becoming northwesterly moderate. In Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
On Friday, it will be sunny during the day and cool at night with winds easterly moderate.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR.

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 637777
Fire Brigade 637777
Blind Bank 75121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 846390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 615800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 874667
Complaints 874667
Amman Municipality 874667
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 874667
Repairs 623101
Fidelity Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 660101
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 18-532101
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 18-532101

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Afif Shukri 898063
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286
Dr. Osama Al Hussein 847289
Dr. Salma Al Dabbas 776751
Firas pharmacy 661412
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nanookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 630731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimchani pharmacy 637660
Nairouh pharmacy 623672
Najm pharmacy 847652
IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qanu 281741
Al Quds pharmacy (---)
ZARQA:
Dr. Yousef Abu Sa'd 989001
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642562
Mallat, J. Amman 856141
Palestine, Shmashani 669131
Shmashani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mushir Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdull 66612707
Al-Ahli, Abdull 666164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajirin 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. A. Shmashani 891611/5
Army, Shmashani 80224950
Queen Alia Hospital 80224950
Amal Hospital 67155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983523
Zarqa National Hospital 773111/2
The Sima Hospital 09983560
Queen Alia Hospital 80224950
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 10217555
Greek Catholic Hospital 10217275
Princess Haya Hospital 10217401
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital 10217401

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
12:40 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
12:40 Sharjah (AH)
13:40 Riyadh (SV)
14:00 Doha (QT)
16:10 Doha (EK)
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 08953281, S. where it should always be verified.
ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:00 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:20 Sana'a (RJ)
07:20 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
09:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
09:30 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:05 Beirut (RJ)
10:05 Muscat, Doha (RJ)
11:20 New Delhi (RJ)
11:55 Colombo (RJ)
12:25 London (RJ)
12:25 Casablanca (RJ)
12:35 Moscow (RJ)
10:25 Athens (RJ)
19:10 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:15 Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
23:30 Rome, Tunis (RJ)
00:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
12:40 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
12:40 Sharjah (AH)
13:40 Riyadh (SV)
14:00 Doha (QT)
16:10 Doha (EK)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:15 Beirut (RJ)
06:30 Agaba (RJ)
07:15 Moscow (RJ)
10:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
11:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
11:15 Rome (RJ)
12:05 London (RJ)
12:15 Athens (RJ)
12:35 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
13:30 Paris (RJ)
19:50 Larnaca (RJ)
20:10 Cairo (RJ)
20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:05 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
23:15 Jeddah (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:50 Beirut, London (BA)
07:45 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Muscat (GF)
14:30 Algiers (AH)
14:40 Riyadh (SV)
17:15 Doha (EK)

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 700 / 500
Banana 600 / 660
Banana (Mukammal) 600 / 660
Banana (imported) 800 / 760
Cabbage 80 / 50
Carrot 210 / 120
Cauliflower 120 / 50
Cucumbers (large) 100 / 50
Cucumbers (small) 220 / 150
Eggplant 180 / 120
Garlic 450 / 600
Grape Fruit 220 / 150
Lemon 300 / 200
Marrow (large) 80 / 50
Marrow (small) 130 / 70
Onion (green) 160 / 100
Onion (dry) 200 / 150
Orange 430 / 300
Pepper (hot) 400 / 300
Pepper (sweet) 420 / 300
Radish 150 / 80
String Beans 500 / 400
Tomato 150 / 80

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN
Dep. Amman 8.00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5.00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7.30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5.00 p.m. every Sunday

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:15 Beirut (RJ)
06:30 Agaba (RJ)
07:15 Moscow (RJ)
10:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
11:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
11:15 Rome (RJ)
12:05 London (RJ)
12:15 Athens (RJ)
12:35 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
13:30 Paris (RJ)
19:50 Larnaca (RJ)
20:10 Cairo (RJ)
20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:05 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
23:15 Jeddah (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:50 Beirut, London (BA)
07:45 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Muscat (GF)
14:30 Algiers (AH)
14:40 Riyadh (SV)
17:15 Doha (EK)



Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb Wednesday meets with visiting Iranian Deputy Trade Minister Masoud Karbassian, who is heading his country's delegation to the Asian Ministerial Conference for the Group of 77 in Amman (Petra photo)

Iranian official suggests agreements to attract foreign investments

AMMAN (Petra) — An Iranian delegation taking part in the Asian Ministerial Conference for the Group of 77 in Amman Wednesday suggested that Jordan and Iran sign two agreements on attracting foreign investments and avoiding dual taxation.

Delegation leader Masoud Karbassian said both countries can promote their trade exchanges by organising trade fairs in each other's capitals.

Mr. Karbassian, Iran's deputy trade minister, made these suggestions during a meeting with President of the Amman Chamber of Trade Haidar Murad and chamber members.

He also suggested that a

Jordanian-Iranian committee be established to follow up on and deal with obstacles to bilateral trade in general.

He said the private sectors in the two countries are called on to exchange trade information and describe opportunities for investment in their respective countries.

For his part, Mr. Murad referred to the Jordanian-Iranian meeting held in Amman last June which he described as having played an instrumental role in paving the ground for bilateral private sector cooperation in industry and trade affairs.

Welcoming Iranian investments in the King-

dom, Mr. Murad said that significant investment opportunities exist in industry, trade, energy, water and infrastructure projects and that there is serious potential for joint ventures with Jordanian counterparts.

Referring to last year's trade levels between Jordan and Iran, Mr. Murad said Iran imported JD 19.64 million worth of Jordanian products and sold the Kingdom JD 5.715 million worth of Iranian goods.

Mr. Karbassian earlier met Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb and discussed with him Jordanian-Iranian economic relations.

Bid to arbitrate labour dispute fails

Abul Shaer refers case to Industrial Court

AMMAN (J.T.) — A labour dispute between Irbid District Electricity Company (IDEC) employees and the company management was Wednesday referred by Minister of Labour Nader Abul Shaer to the Industrial Court after a bid to settle the dispute through arbitration reached a deadlock.

Last Nov. 19, Mr. Abul Shaer had formed an arbitration committee to examine the case and reconcile the two parties through amicable means, but the committee reported back to the minister that it had been unsuccessful in its mission.

Acting on behalf of the employees, the General Union of Electrical Workers had submitted a detailed memorandum to the Ministry of Labour detailing their demands which include increasing the workers' pay by JD 20 per month and increasing their professional allowance by 10 per cent.

Meanwhile Ministry of Labour Secretary General

Saleh Tarawneh issued a strict warning to Jordanian employers against arbitrarily sacking Jordanian employees to make job opportunities available to non-Jordanians.

The Ministry of Labour reaffirms the right of Jordanian workers to priority in employment opportunities in Jordanian institutions and calls on the employers to stop the laying off of Jordanian workers except with due reason, and to resort to the Jordanian laws and courts to settle employment disputes.

Mr. Tarawneh said employers should safeguard the interests of Jordanian workers and should put an end to irresponsible measures against these workers. He warned that the ministry would have to resort to deterrent measures against violators of the law.

Adding that the government is keen to help create job opportunities for Jordanian workers and deal with the unemployment problem, Mr. Tarawneh

said the ministry is now finalising a draft labour law which caters to the new developments in the Jordanian labour market.

He said the Ministry of Labour, within a three month period that ended on Oct. 26, issued 100,000 work permits to non-Jordanians who are to be employed in services and production sectors for which no Jordanians were available.

The ministry had warned the estimated 250,000 foreign workers in Jordan to obtain these permits or face legal and deportation measures.

The Minister of Labour said in November that nearly 250,000 foreign workers were found employed in the country only 40,000 of them had obtained work permits before the Oct. 26 deadline.

Most of the foreign workers in Jordan, according to the Ministry of Labour, are Egyptians, Syrians, Pakistanis, Indians and Sri Lankans.

Government, industry sound warning on water, environment dilemmas

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat Wednesday opened a two-day national conference on industrial pollution prevention and water conservation, warning that Jordan will face an acute water shortage by the year 2010 if measures are not taken to find new resources.

Ministry estimates put the shortage at 600 million cubic metres (mcm) annually and said the Kingdom is finding it difficult to make up for this shortage through usual methods and techniques.

Water and the environment are two closely connected elements, and measures to safeguard both should run parallel to each other, said the minister, adding that Jordan faces a serious imbalance in water and other natural resources, particularly as the growing population places added demands for water for domestic, agricultural and industrial purposes.

According to Dr. Irsheidat, industrial pollution will prove to be one of the country's major challenges in the next decade. He therefore urged the concerned authorities to swiftly identify and adopt the most appropriate measures to protect the country's fragile environment and scarce

water resources.

Referring to the ministry's measures to help protect and increase water resources, Dr. Irsheidat said teams of experts monitor the quality of water, apply measures to protect the water basins and conduct regular inspections of factories along the Zarqa River where many industries had been established.

The minister emphasised that several factories in the Zarqa River Basin area continue to ignore general environmental safety requirements, and the ministry was proceeding with legal measures to deal with violations of regulations and ordinances.

In addition, he said, a specialised committee at the ministry is responsible for drafting a national water strategy to serve the country until the year 2030.

The two-day meeting has been organised by the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

The organisers said discussion will focus on the prevention of industrial pollution and the most effective measures to protect the environment and water resources from pollution.



Amman Chamber of Industry President Khaldoun Abu Hassan (second right) Wednesday addresses the opening of a two-day national conference on industrial pollution prevention and water conservation. Also on the podium (second left) is Minister of Water and Irrigation Saleh Irsheidat (Petra photo)

In his address to the opening session, ACI President Khaldoun Abu Hassan said that in 1991 the chamber set up a department to deal with the problems of the effects of industry on the environment, such as the negative consequences of

industrial waste, and waste water. Mr. Abu Hassan said the committee has been assisted in its endeavours by technical aid from USAID.

Several working papers dealing with the role of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation in preventing pollu-

tion and protecting water resources, techniques to stop industrial pollution and executing programmes to protect the Amman and Zarqa water basins will be reviewed by nearly 120 delegates representing the pri-

Saoud says 360 needy students to receive university scholarships

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Higher Education has assigned 20 per cent of the 1,800 scholarships for higher education this year to needy students from different governorates and will publish all the names of scholarship recipients early next month.

The announcement was made by Minister of Higher Education Rateb Saoud, who said the ministry received 5,500 applications for scholarships. The scholarships will apply to enrolment at all the state universities including AL at Bayt University.

He said the bulk of the recipients this year will only receive tuition scholarships. The 360 needy student recipients, including those whose families receive financial aid from the National Aid

Fund (NAF), will receive scholarships for tuition and a monthly living allowance. The scholarships will be made available in the second semester which is due to start before the end of January.

In the past such scholarships used to comprise tuition fees, expenses for books and the monthly allowance, and they were the same for non-needy students as for needy students.

According to Dr. Saoud, the awarding of the new scholarships was conducted according to principles and conditions which ensure a fair distribution to all the governorates.

He said that the first 10 male and 10 female students in the tawjihi examinations in the literary and scientific, industrial and commercial streams,

as well as the first five in the nursing stream and the first three in the agricultural stream and the first in the hotel management streams will benefit from the scholarships this year.

The minister said five per cent of the total number of the scholarships will go to the children of employees in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. 50 scholarships will be awarded to the children of government employees, 30 scholarships will be received by the children of the badia regions, nine scholarships will go to students under the care of the NAF, and nine scholarships will be awarded to students whose families come under the care of the Zakat Fund.

Brother of defendant testifies in grisly Salt murder trial

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Testifying before the Criminal Court Wednesday the brother of Kayed Ahmad, the man accused of murdering Mohammad Ensour in Salt last August, said his brother admitted that he did not know what he was doing when he committed the crime.

Kayed Ahmad is on trial on charges of robbing and murdering Mohammad Ensour whose body was found cut up and discarded in three separate garbage bags around the area of Salt. Ahmad has pleaded innocent to all charges.

According to the witness, Nizar Ahmad, during a visit to his brother, who was being held at Swaga Prison, the defendant responded to his brother's question of why he committed such a crime by saying "I do not know what happened to me, or why or how I killed him."

The witness also testified that the day following the murder (Aug. 15), the brothers of the victim came to his shop looking for their brother. He said the victim's brothers were accompanied by Kayed (the defendant). According to the witness, he advised the brothers to file a missing person's report with the police, and that Kayed had offered to go with the brothers to the authorities to make the report.

The 38-year-old witness told the court that his brother Kayed borrowed his car twice on Aug. 14, the day the murder was committed. He said his brother took it once in the morning for three hours and again in the evening for four hours.

Also testifying Wednesday was Ibrahim Ramahi, a forensics expert from Al Bashir Hospital, who told the court that upon examination of the victim's body parts, he determined that the victim was strangled to death and the killer used a light-weight sharp object to cut up the body as well as a saw, which was reported by police earlier.

Earlier Wednesday, the Criminal Court opened the trial of two men accused of killing and involvement in the killing of their relative in the Aden area, 20 kilometres south of Amman, in October of last year.

Osama Husni S. 21, is accused of the premeditated murder of his brother Ugba, 25, and Mohammad Abdul Latif, the nephew of the victim, is charged with complicity in the crime.

According to court documents, Osama was jealous of his father's attention to his brother Ugba.

The document said that Osama complained to his nephew Mohammad, and they decided to kill Ugba...

On Oct. 23, the night of the incident, the document said that the two lured Osama to the Aden area then Osama drew an axe and struck his brother several times on the head and in the chest. The document said residents in the area told police later that they had heard a man crying for help.

The defendants were apprehended by authorities on Oct. 25, the document said, adding that they confessed and reenacted their crime in front of police.

Presiding Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq set Jan. 17 to resume the two trials.

Police search for clues in case of woman's body found in well

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police Wednesday were investigating the death of a 40-year-old woman whose body was found in a deserted water well in Umm Butmah town in Muwaqqar, an official source said.

Fatmeb M. G., the mother of five, was reported missing Wednesday morning by her family, said the source. Police were alerted hours later by residents of Umm Butmah that a body was found in a well, the source added.

According to the source, preliminary investigations showed that the woman's death may have been an accident because there were no indications of violence or struggle on the body.

"We are still waiting for autopsy results to determine the cause of the death," the source said, adding that authorities were questioning the victim's husband.

Police contacted by the Jordan Times Wednesday confirmed the incident and said it was under investigation.

Firefighters extinguish boiler room blaze

Meanwhile, firefighters in Amman Tuesday extinguished a blaze which engulfed a boiler room in a five-story building in the neighbourhood of Al Hussein City. There were no casualties, Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials reported.

Captain Farid Share', director of the Public Relations Department at the CDD, told the Jordan Times that the blaze caused extensive damage to the 10 boilers in a small room in the basement of the building.

According to Capt. Share', initial investigations indicate that the fire might have been accidentally started by the guard of the building.

"We have questioned the

guard, who sleeps in the boiler room, and used a lit heater which might have ignited the blaze," the CDD official said.

It took fire fighters less than an hour to control and extinguish the fire and prevent it from spreading to the upper floors, Captain Share' said.

He said that an investigation committee was formed to determine the cause of the fire.

According to Capt. Share', boiler related incidents always increase during the winter.

He said that according to CDD statistics in 1994, there were 27 boiler related incidents. In 1995, he added, the numbers exceeded 30.

Capt. Share' said that most of the incidents are attributed to negligence: failure to conduct annual maintenance on the boilers and failure to clean the boiler room floor which usually contains oil drippings and other flammable liquids.

WHAT'S GOING ON

films

* "Inherit the Wind," at the American Centre on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

* "Jurnal," (Parts III & IV) at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, on Thursday at 4:30 p.m.

* "In Search of Pure Colour," (about French artist Pierre Bonnard — with commentary (in Arabic) by Dr. Khalid

Khreiss at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

exhibitions

* Plastic (abstract) art exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina (until Feb. 6).

* Works by artist Raphael Chaproul at the French Cultural Centre (until Jan. 31).

The Embassy of France
announces that it will receive
condolences over the death of
the former President of the Republic
Mr. François Mitterrand
on Wednesday the 10th and
Thursday the 11th of January 1996,
from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the
Ambassador's Residence in Jabal Amman

Chechens free 2,000, threaten to shoot remaining hostages

KIZLYAR, Russia (R) — Chechen guerrillas freed some 2,000 hostages at a hospital in neighbouring Dagestan but threatened to shoot the dozens they still hold if their convoy of buses was prevented from getting back to Chechnya.

Russian news agencies said at least 200 rebels, who left the hospital at Kizlyar early in the morning with about 160 hostages, had been stopped just short of the Chechen border.

ITAR-TASS news agency said they threatened to start shooting immediately after they were told a bridge on their route had been blown up. Interfax news agency said a Russian helicopter had fired on the convoy of 11 buses and two trucks.

The Chechens, from a band known as "Lone Wolf", were now talking to local officials and asking for a new route, it said.

Earlier, smiling gunmen wearing Muslim headbands appeared to be relishing the embarrassment they had caused to the Russian government, which they regard as an occupying power in Chechnya.

They cheered, gave clenched fist salutes and waved a green Chechen flag at a Reuters television crew who filmed their column of grubby buses humping along the snowy road to the frontier.

But Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin vowed to hit back after the second mass hostage-taking outside Chechnya's borders in seven months.

"The handi who took hostages in Kizlyar will be punished," ITAR-TASS news agency quoted him as saying.

"But we do not intend to use head-on methods which could put the lives of the hostages at risk."

Police and troops in an armoured personnel carrier had followed just metres behind the column and a military helicopter clattered overhead.

Before the halt, a Reuters cameraman had boarded one of the buses where the atmosphere seemed almost festive — though one woman hostage was perched uncomfortably next to a stack of armour-piercing shells.

The Chechens left the Dagestani railway town of Kizlyar early in the morning after holding out for more than 24 hours.

The bodies of two dead guerrillas lay in the mud of the hospital compound as nurses and volunteers carried patients moaning in fear and pain out of the building. Policemen carried out mines laid by the gunmen on the lower floors.

"People in each department had been wounded in the hand or the foot. They killed a policeman on the spot and two old women did not survive the strain," Mohamed Maladzhiev, duty doctor in the surgery, told Reuters.

Mr. Maladzhiev said several of his colleagues had accompanied the rebels. "Were they volunteers? I do not know. The rebels had guns. They said you must come with us," he said bitterly.

Some ministers of the Dagestani regional government volunteered to act as human shields on the convoy, TASS said.

The drama started early Tuesday when the rebels raided Kizlyar, just across the border from Chechnya.

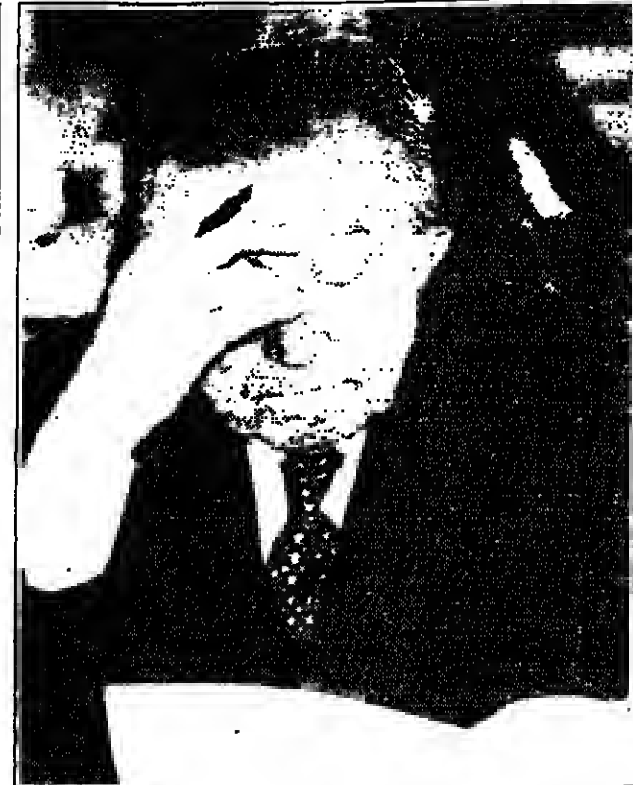
They first attacked a military airfield and then seized the hospital. At least a dozen people died, including two hostages.

Their commander, Salman Raduyev, whose wife is related to Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, said initially his key demand was the immediate withdrawal of all Russian troops from Chechnya — something Moscow rejects out of hand.

It was not immediately clear why he agreed to leave Kizlyar.

The hostage crisis was similar to an attack by Chechen fighters last June in the southern Russian town of Budennovsk, where more than 100 people were killed in a hospital siege.

"Compared to Budennovsk, one can say that it all ended all right," said one official. "With the great help of the (local) government they came to a deal to avoid bloodshed." Moscow sent troops into Chechnya just over a year ago to crush the mostly Muslim region's bid for independence.



Former Italian Premier Giulio Andreotti ponders over documents while listening to the testimony of former mafia member Tommaso Buscetta (AFP photo)

Mafia turncoat tells court Andreotti ordered journalist's murder

PADUA, Italy (AFP) — Mafia turncoat Tommaso Buscetta told a court here trying former Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti for alleged links with the mafia that Mr. Andreotti ordered the killing of a plying journalist in 1978.

"This Roman journalist Mino Pecorelli was creating serious problems for Giulio Andreotti because of documents he had obtained and wanted to publish," Mr. Buscetta told the court in eight hours of testimony Tuesday.

It was the first time Mr. Buscetta had publicly accused Mr. Andreotti of ordering the murder of Pecorelli. He had claimed as much before but only when being questioned by investigators.

He said former mafia chiefs "Gaetano Badalamenti and Stefano Badalamenti told me themselves that they had killed the journalist" to help Mr. Andreotti.

Mr. Andreotti who was seven-times prime minister and 21 times minister will be tried in connection with Pecorelli's murder in April before a court in Perugia.

Mr. Buscetta also hinted that Mr. Andreotti might have had a hand in the 1978 killing of Christian-Democratic leader Aldo Moro by leftwing terrorists. He said "an order was issued from above to prevent the mafia negotiating his release."

Mr. Andreotti who remained calm throughout the testimony, minimised the impact of the accusations made by "a Tommaso Buscetta who has changed

his identity ten times" and who as a mafia chief "has always regarded murder as something normal".

Earlier the court was told Mr. Andreotti tried to help a mafia contact's brother-in-law convicted of homicide.

His Christian Democrat Party also associated with known underworld bosses to gain electoral and political success in return for providing lucrative business contracts once in office, Mr. Buscetta alleged.

Mr. Buscetta, the prosecution's star witness in the trial in this northern city, made the accusations in an open court after refusing to speak from behind a screen to protect his identity.

He said Mr. Badalamenti, then overall head of the cosa nostra (Sicilian mafia), went to Mr. Andreotti's Rome office in 1979, "to thank him for intervening on behalf of his brother-in-law Filippo Rini who was convicted of homicide."

Mr. Buscetta, 68, is the most famous of the so-called "pentiti" (turncoats). A former cosa nostra boss in Palermo, he has been living under police protection in the United States after undergoing cosmetic surgery.

He said there was no point in trying to hide behind a screen after a newspaper managed to photograph him a year ago.

The trial of Mr. Andreotti opened on Sept. 28 in Palermo but has been transferred to Padua for security reasons. In three months only three witnesses have given evidence out of about 500 due to be called.

Rwanda tribunal names first 3 suspects accused of genocide

ARUSHA, Tanzania (AFP) — The prosecutor in the international criminal tribunal for Rwanda Wednesday named three suspects accused of genocide, two former mayors and an ex-minister currently detained in Belgium.

Judge Richard Goldstone and his deputy, Honore Rakotonmanana, said the tribunal should ask Belgian authorities to hand over for trial Elie Ndayambaje, former mayor of Muganza, Joseph Kanyabashi, former mayor of Ngoma, and Alphonse Higanzi, a former government minister and manager of a match factory.

All three are accused of organising massacres in southern Rwanda's Butare region in 1994, the prosecutors told a public hearing in the court.

The court held off its ruling until Thursday, but is expected to accept the prosecution request and ask Belgium, the former colonial power in Rwanda, to hand over the three people who were arrested last year. The tribunal was estab-

lished by the U.N. Security Council in November 1994 to try those held responsible for instigating and carrying out genocide and other human rights violations mainly during a brutal civil war that wracked the central African country between April and July that year.

Most of the suspects are extremist militias and officials of the former Hutu majority regime, accused of killing at least 500,000 minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus before the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seized power in the capital Kigali.

Belgium has offered the tribunal full cooperation, said Mr. Goldstone, citing a letter from the justice minister in Brussels.

It was the first time the court had publicly named indicted suspects.

In December, the tribunal announced that eight people had been charged, but did not identify them because they were still at large.

Rwandan authorities are also investigating the three, Judge Rakotonmanana said.

Blow to West as Soviet old guard given foreign ministry

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin implicitly has signalled the end of a foreign policy judged too pro-Western by conservatives, by appointing a Soviet-era apparatchik as foreign minister just six months before crucial presidential elections.

Mr. Yeltsin named Yevgeny Primakov, a veteran spy chief Tuesday, to succeed Andrei Kozyrev who quit last week after five years in office. For western leaders, Mr. Kozyrev personified a new policy of cooperation with the West but for that very reason he was disliked by the Communists and Russian ultranationalists.

Mr. Primakov on the other hand is the "bête noire" of the Americans, according to one diplomat, because of his style and attitudes reminiscent of the Soviet era.

"President Yeltsin held a whole series of consultations before taking a decision and he appointed Primakov at the suggestion of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin," said Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman Sergei Medvedev.

By replacing the flamboyant Kozyrev with the dour 66-year-old Primakov, Mr. Yeltsin has signalled his acknowledgement of the outcome of recent legislative polls won by the Communists and the nationalists.

Mr. Primakov an orientalist who has always had excellent relations with the Arab and Muslim world may set out to recover the influence lost by Moscow in the third world since the collapse of the Soviet Union, said Sergei Markov of the Carnegie Foundation.

"If Russia is rejected by the West, Primakov could work on the north-south confrontation and try to make Russia a new mouthpiece for the Third World," he said.

"The appointment of Primakov is logical in the light of the campaign for the June presidential elections," a Western diplomat said. In his view Mr. Yeltsin "wants to send a strong signal both to Russians and to his Western partners".

Mr. Primakov's role is expected to be a transitional one, to implement Mr. Yeltsin's policies up to the election

and eclipse the memory of Mr. Kozyrev. The latter had become unpopular even with the reformers because of his many concessions to the West just at a time when Russian nationalism was on the rise.

Analysts said however that they expected no sudden reversal of Russian foreign policy. The shift towards a "cold peace" with the West had already begun under Mr. Kozyrev whose margin of manoeuvre had shrunk in recent months.

Mr. Yeltsin has said he wants to reassert his influence in foreign policy and Mr. Primakov will have to deal with the newly established "foreign policy council" set up and headed by the president.

The council which includes the ministers of foreign affairs, defence, external trade, finance and security, is answerable directly to Mr. Yeltsin.

Its role is the "make Russia's foreign policy more effective and implement the guidelines of the president in foreign affairs," according to a Kremlin statement.

N. Korean delegates arrive in Hawaii to discuss Korean war dead

SEOUL (AFP) — A North Korean delegation arrived in Hawaii Wednesday for talks with the United States on the repatriation of remains of thousands of American soldiers killed during the 1950-53 Korean war, television said.

MBC, a South Korean broadcasting network, showed the seven-member North Korean delegation being escorted by U.S. officials out of a hotel in Hawaii.

"We came here for intensive discussions on the issue of returning the remains of U.S. war dead," the North's chief delegate Kim Byung-Heung told MBC.

During his four-day stay in Hawaii, Mr. Kim, director of the foreign ministry's foreign policy division, is scheduled to visit the U.S. army's central identification laboratory.

The North Korean team consists of three foreign policy officials, two military officials and an expert in MIA (missing in action) identification.

The U.S. side will be headed by James Wald, deputy assistant secretary of defense for prisoners of war and MIA affairs.

The South's Yonhap news agency quoted a source in Washington as saying that talks in Hawaii would focus on sharing techniques for MIA identification with North Korea and on forming a joint excavation team.

In 1993 the U.S. side proposed that its own experts travel to North Korea to work alongside northerners excavating the remains of U.S. Korean war dead, but North Korea has yet to respond.

A U.S. military spokesman in Seoul said last week that the Hawaii meeting was to familiarise North Korean army and government officials with U.S. forensic identification methods.

Since the two nations opened MIA talks in 1987, 210 sets of remains have been returned from the North, the last one of a serviceman believed to be a British soldier were handed over.

But only five of the sets have so far been positively identified, in part due to a disastrous fire in the army records section in St. Louis, Missouri, 15 years ago.

World leaders to pay last respects to Mitterrand

PARIS (AFP) — A host of world leaders will gather in Paris Thursday to pay their last respects to former President Francois Mitterrand, France's longest serving head of state and a key figure in post-war world politics.

Some 20 heads of state or government will gather for a memorial mass at the Notre Dame Cathedral to pay tribute to Mitterrand, who died from prostate cancer Monday aged 79, eight months after leaving office.

At exactly the same time the Socialist leader will be buried in an intimate family ceremony, in accordance with his wishes, in the family vault in his home town of Jarnac, southwest France.

The simple ceremony will be in line with previous French presidents including General Charles de Gaulle and Georges Pompidou, who also declined the pomp and circumstance of a state funeral.

Participants at the Notre Dame mass, to begin at 11 a.m. (1000 GMT) at exactly the same time as the Jarnac ceremony, will include key political leaders whose countries were marked by Mitterrand over his 14 years in office.

Those already confirmed include German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Israeli President Ezer Weizman, while Russia could be represented by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev may also attend.

For Britain the Prince of Wales has been confirmed, while Prime Minister John Major's presence has been ruled. Although U.S. President Bill Clinton will



Gilbert (left) and Jean-Christophe Mitterrand (4th left), sons of the late French president, arrive at their father's Paris home where his body lays in state (AFP photo)

not attend personally, a high-level official is to be designated.

A national day of mourning will be declared to mark the funeral.

Flags will fly at half mast on all public buildings, while public offices and schools will respect a minute's silence at 11:00 a.m.

France has been grieving since Monday morning when Mitterrand died at his official residence near the Eiffel Tower, after a long battle against prostate cancer.

Mitterrand's body will remain there until Thursday morning, when it will be flown by military aircraft to Jarnac.

There, in the heart of the cognac region where he was born, he will be buried

in the family vault where his parents and maternal grandparents rest in a ceremony to be attended only by his closest friends and family.

One confirmed report has said Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres could be one of the few public figures to attend the actual funeral.

Gaullist President Jacques Chirac, Mitterrand's longtime adversary, said France should meditate on Mitterrand's legacy. "at the time when Francois Mitterrand is entering history, I hope we can reflect on his message," he said.

Mr. Kohl, with whom Mitterrand forged the Franco-German axis which is at the heart of the European Union, paid a personal tribute to Mitterrand in a newspaper interview Wednesday.

Describing him as "a great patriot and a passionate European," he told the daily Le Figaro: "His political vision of a united Europe must continue in the future to guide our actions and thoughts."

Wednesday French Socialists plan a rally at the Place de la Bastille in the shadow of a huge photo of Mitterrand, surrounded by garlands of red roses, to be erected on Paris's famous revolutionary square.

Other countries represented at the Notre Dame mass will include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine.

'Babies left mentally scarred by Kobe quake'

TOKYO (AFP) — The killer quake which hit the Japanese city of Kobe year ago left mental scars on nearly 30 per cent of babies aged around one year in the area, according to a survey conducted by private-sector study group. Parents of 28.8 per cent of the 1,023 babies surveyed said the infants stopped laughing, started crying heavily at night or showed other mental scars after the Jan. 17 quake, the Tokyo based study group for mother-child welfare has said. The group conducted the poll between May and August last year in six cities affected. Only 2.9 per cent of the babies suffered physical injury, but high body temperatures, diarrhoea and other physical effects were seen in more than 30 per cent of babies soon after the tremor according to the group's findings. Meanwhile, the official death toll from the quake increased to 6,336, a fresh statistics by municipal governments attributed another 28 deaths to the quake.

Twenty species face extinction in 1996

LONDON (R) — Twenty rare creatures, from the world's highest butterfly to a flightless parrot, face extinction in 1996, environmentalists said. Among those listed as in danger of vanishing are Chinese alligators, the Californian condor, New Zealand's flightless kakapo parrot and the world's largest butterfly, the Queen Alexandra's Birdwing from Papua New Guinea.

Antarctic dictionary — cure for 'big eye'

SYDNEY (R) — Antarctica, the last frontier, has been home to human beings for so long now that it has begun to boast its own kind of language. An Australian scientist, finding it difficult to understand some of her colleagues after their return from the frozen continent, has told Reuters that she was compiling the world's first dictionary of "Antarctic English". The dictionary, listed as an official project by Australia's Antarctic Division, will comprise about 1,000 listings, including such Antarctic slang as "getting slotted" (falling down an ice crevasse) and "ice widow" (a spouse left at home). The book may even be a cure for "big eye" — That's the name for insomnia suffered by people who can't sleep in winter time when it's dark all the time, and in summer when it's light all the time," said scientist and writer Bernadette Hince, the dictionary's editor. Antarctica is also the place where people receive "whizzers" (a telex from home), live in an "apple" (dome-shaped polar hut) and get "RTA'd" (return to Australia). On their return home, they can experience "greenout", the opposite of "whitout", it encountered by Antarctic personnel who see tree and grass for the first time in a while. "They do speak the same language, but there are lots of interesting little words that have migrated down there," said Ms. Hince, who will visit an Australian Antarctic base this summer as part of her project. Antarctica is a populated year-round thousands of English-speaking scientists and support staff in U.S. New Zealand, Australian, British and South African bases across the huge ice sheet.

Clinton vetoes welfare reform bill

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton has vetoed a welfare reform bill passed last month by the Republican-controlled Congress, saying it was inadequate and contained excessive budget cuts.

The bill "does too little to move people from welfare to work. It is burdened with deep budget cuts and structural changes that fall short of real reform," Mr. Clinton said late Tuesday. His decision to veto the measure had been expected.

The president said he was "determined to keep working with Congress to achieve 'an acceptable welfare reform plan that is motivated by urgency of reform rather than by a budget plan that is contrary to America's values.'"

Reforming the welfare system has been a key goal of both Mr. Clinton's 1992 election campaign and the Republicans' 1994 "contract with America," but the complexity of the task and ideological differences between the two sides have stymied the effort.

Welfare reform is also part of the ongoing negotiations between Mr. Clinton and Republican congressional leaders for a plan to balance the federal budget in seven years. Those talks were suspended Tuesday with no agreement for about a week.

The bill rejected by Mr. Clinton was approved by both houses of Congress last month, but neither vote in the Senate (52-47) or the House of Representatives (245-178) were large enough for the two-thirds majority needed to override the presidential veto.

In turning down the plan, Mr. Clinton said welfare reform "must be considered in the context of other critical and related issues such as Medicaid and the earned-income tax credit," which provides tax relief for the working poor.

In particular, Mr. Clinton objected to the bill's proposed \$60 billion cut in welfare spending over the next seven years, which included doing away with federally guaranteed cash assistance for millions of poor children.

The bill, which garnered the negative vote of most Democrats in Congress, would have distributed federal money to state governments for them to use on programmes supporting the poor.

The vetoed bill, Mr. Clinton said, "was designed to meet an arbitrary budget target (balancing the budget by 2002) rather than to achieve serious reform."

"I urge the Congress to work with me in good faith to produce a bipartisan welfare reform agreement that is tough on work and responsibility, but not tough on children and on parents who are responsible and who want to work," Mr. Clinton said.



An employee checks out the damages caused by a bomb that exploded the night of Jan. 8-9 in Ajaccio (AFP photo)

Hashimoto making last-minute efforts to find himself finance minister

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Prime Minister-designate Ryutaro Hashimoto, was Wednesday drawing on all the political skill that got him to the top office to form a cabinet strong enough to keep him there.

But after two days' of intense horse-trading, arm-twisting and calling in favours, Mr. Hashimoto was still without a volunteer willing to "die" for him in the finance portfolio.

That ministry is expected to be the albatross around Mr. Hashimoto's neck, with Ichiro Ozawa's opposition pledging to focus its attack in parliament on the coalition's decision to use billions of dollars in taxpayers' money in liquidating failed housing loan companies, known as Jusen.

The media and public turned against incumbent Masayoshi Takemura over the issue, and while he has resisted taking direct responsibility for the Jusen, he has decided not to join the new cabinet.

Mr. Hashimoto, who is to replace Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama and appoint a new cabinet Thursday, has repeatedly asked Seiichi Kajiyama, a veteran of his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to take the unwanted finance post.

Kajiyama turned down the offer once, reportedly telling Mr. Hashimoto that "only someone who is loyal enough to die for you can fill this post."

But the 69-year-old lower house member, who has formerly held the justice and trade portfolios, is still the most likely candidate, Kyodo news said, noting Mr. Hashimoto believes Mr. Kajiyama can run the ministry with "an iron fist."

Another candidate mooted by the media is Kosuke Hori, 61-year-old former

education minister who has close ties with Mr. Hashimoto. He is also in line for chief cabinet secretary, the key government spokesman.

Reports said the cabinet negotiations were riven by factional fighting in the LDP, with power groups vying for more ministerial posts.

But despite the grasping for power, no faction wanted to touch the finance ministry.

Of the 21 cabinet posts to be filled, the coalition has agreed that 12 should go to the LDP, six to Mr. Murayama's Social Democratic Party (SDP) and two to the new party Sakigake headed by Mr. Takemura.

The three top ministries — finance, foreign affairs and chief cabinet secretary — have been reserved for the LDP, with the two smaller coalition members agreeing not to challenge in exchange for other significant posts.

SDP Secretary-General Wataru Kubo, who also declined the finance post, appeared certain to accept the deputy prime minister-ship, while senior Sakigake member Shusei Tanaka was expected to take the economic planning agency job.

The post of foreign minister, who has to negotiate with the United States on reduction of U.S. military bases in Okinawa, may go to Yukihiko Ikeda, a former defence agency director-general, news reports said.

Incumbent Prime Minister Murayama made a surprise announcement Friday that he would resign, virtually transferring power to Mr. Hashimoto, who heads the LDP.

Mr. Hashimoto is to be elected as the 82nd prime minister on the coalition's majority Thursday.

New York homeless brace for next blizzard

NEW YORK (AFP) — Some 50 homeless people huddled a stone's throw from the city command centre directing action against the "blizzard of the century," bracing themselves for the next wave of the storm battering the big apple.

In the freezing wind, armed with shovels or brooms, they tried to clear the snow from the insides of shacks fashioned from metal sheets or cardboard boxes along side the East River under the Brooklyn bridge.

"Last weekend's been pretty tough," said Teresa, 32, who has been living for the past five months in the place she calls "my hut".

"It's better than the shelters: they rape you there, steal your stuff or attack you," she said.

"Here we care for each other, we share," she added.

Besides, "when it's that cold, shelters are packed anyway," said the young mother of two who "got caught up in the spiral" after losing her job.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani holds news conferences twice daily at the command centre where he gives storm tips — such as shoveling and dressing techniques: "You push it, don't throw it above your shoulder... dress in layers."

According to different social welfare organisations, some 7,000 people in New York spend the nights outdoors as temperatures plunge under 15 degrees Celsius.

New bombing hits Island of Corsica

AJACCIO, Corsica (R) — Corsica was rocked by another bombing early Wednesday, a day after separatist guerrillas claimed responsibility for 27 small blasts across the French Mediterranean island, police said.

The latest bomb struck a tax collector's office in the town of Borgo in northern Corsica, partially destroying the building but causing no casualties, they said.

Officials speculated the bombing wave was intended to put pressure on the government to agree to separatist demands ahead of a planned visit to Corsica by Interior Minister Jean-Louis Debré.

French Prime Minister Alain Juppe was scheduled

to meet Corsican members of parliament in Paris Wednesday afternoon to discuss the situation, local officials said.

A relatively small separatist group known as Resistenza claimed responsibility for the 27 bombings which took place late Monday night, complaining it was being frozen out of secret negotiations that the government denies are taking place.

Another 20 bombs were defused before they could go off, police said. Resistenza is one of three main clandestine separatist groups now operating in Corsica, the others being the historic and the traditional wings of the outlawed Corsican National

Liberation Front (FLNC).

All three groups split off from the FLNC last year, triggering a burst of fratricidal killings among the rival separatist movements as the year came to a close.

Night-time bombings, which rarely cause casualties, are a traditional tactic of Corsican separatists, who have been waging a low-level guerrilla campaign for the past 25 years in pursuit of greater autonomy from mainland France.

More than 40 bombs have exploded on Corsica since the start of 1996. There were 602 blasts last year and 3,000 on the picturesque resort island over the last five years, police said.

Hong Kong, Britain dismiss reports of Rifkind blunder

HONG KONG (R) — Astonished British and Hong Kong officials scrambled Wednesday to dismiss reports in the British colony that Britain's foreign secretary had blundered in talks in Beijing.

Even Chinese officials, who rarely miss an opportunity to needle the British, seemed taken aback, Hong Kong reporters in Beijing said.

Tuesday, visiting British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said talks with Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen had resolved some of the thorny issues over the mid-1997 handover of Hong Kong to China.

The Eastern Express newspaper, quoting an unnamed senior Chinese official it said was close to the talks, ran a front-page story headlined: "Rifkind blunders in Beijing," saying the foreign secretary had misquoted Mr. Qian.

Callers, including veteran journalists, to Hong Kong government

radio speculated the Chinese had caught the British off guard once again, saying it was foolish to announce details of any talks in China before getting it in writing.

Another newspaper, in a more sober report, merely reported China had failed to confirm Mr. Rifkind's statement.

"Announcement of 'agreements' on Hong Kong ... Meet with Chinese ridicule, British scepticism," the Eastern Express said, quoting an unnamed Chinese official close to the talks.

Mr. Rifkind said Tuesday that talks with Mr. Qian had achieved "significant progress" on five outstanding Hong Kong issues.

"The story is very wide of the mark," said a British Foreign Office spokesman in Hong Kong of the Eastern Express report. "These agreements represent significant progress."

Mr. Rifkind reported progress on

untangling an impasse over the CT9 Hong Kong container terminal investment.

The project had replaced Hong Kong's new airport as the major source of hickering and disagreement since relations between Britain and China soured over Beijing's anger with the introduction of democratic reforms in Hong Kong.

Mr. Rifkind also reported that China had agreed to permit Hong Kong's non-Chinese minorities to retain their right of abode in the territory after the handover.

The reaction in the jittery British colony, where morale leading up to the countdown to 1997 is low, was initially of surprise and delight.

"Agreement clinched on passports and CT9," ran the banner headline in the south China Morning Post.

All the main Chinese papers followed a similar euphoric line, although British government offi-

cials said the agreements represented only a first stage and plenty remained to be sorted out.

"It just goes to show how easy it is for the Chinese to perk up sentiment in Hong Kong if they choose to," said a Hong Kong government official.

But when reports began to trickle in suggesting China was hacking away, Hong Kong and British officials were puzzled.

They said checks showed China had not even hinted that Mr. Rifkind's report of his meeting with Mr. Qian had differed in form or substance from what was said.

"Rifkind reported accurately what Qian said to him. What we need to do is flesh out some of the detail now," a Hong Kong government spokesman said.

A Chinese diplomat in Hong Kong confirmed work would begin soon on building on the agreements reached with Mr. Rifkind.

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Paving the way ahead

THE WARM welcome that was accorded to His Majesty King Hussein and the accompanying delegation by the Israeli people is a testimony to the Jewish people's yearning to a full and warm peace with their Arab neighbours in the Middle East, a peace that King Hussein has become a symbol of its future shape. The King, of course, has a vision that developed over the years. It is a vision of a Middle East at peace with itself, where cooperation replaces conflict, animosity gives way to sympathy and tolerance overcomes prejudice. The dream must be in the heart of every man and woman in the region. But long years of conflicts and wars have blurred it and have left many scars in the psyche of many.

As Jordan strives to introduce democracy and pluralism to the Arab World, it also hopes that the peace that is developing between the Jordanian and Israeli peoples will be a model that will be emulated by all the Arab peoples and their Jewish neighbours. Both sacred tasks are of course difficult to achieve in a relatively short time and the success of each depends on progress in the other. Truly democratic societies, it has been confirmed, do not resort to war to solve conflicts. Perhaps that explains the degree of normalisation of relations between Jordan and Israel and procrastination on other fronts.

Yet neither Jordan's democratic process nor its peace drive will prosper and bear fruit if peace was not comprehensive and genuine. Certainly this will not materialise before all the peoples decide not only to end the state of war and sign peace treaties, but also to exchange visits, sit together, exchange views, look into each others cultures, dig into their histories, etc.

Not only should Jordan, and the rest of the Arabs, be more forthcoming in their quest for peace; Israel should also do the same. Israel has genuine fears and the Arabs have genuine fears too. Both should go out of their ways to demonstrate that they care about each other's fears and apprehensions.

The children who sang for peace last night on television screens, and the millions of them who did not, deserve a better future. And wars and conflicts never bring better futures. It is therefore the responsibility of every believer in peace and a better future to emulate the steps King Hussein, the king of peace, has taken so far.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN COMMENTING on Jordan's intention to acquire American-made sophisticated F16 fighter planes and modern tanks, a writer in Al Ra'i said that the modern weapons are needed for defence against any source of aggression. Fahed Al Fanek said for the first time Jordan is able to acquire weapons of high sophistication without encountering any problem except a condition not to use them against Israel, something which of course is understood since Jordan does not intend to use the weapons except in self-defence against any party including Israel. The Americans place no conditions on Jordan when these weapons are used in self-defence, and so, these weapons are certain to find their way here, added the writer. At the same time, he said, Israel is not the only party that could pose danger to Jordan, adding that Jordan can use these weapons in defending other parts of the Arab World like for instance defending Yemen against Ethiopia or Eritrea, Iraq against Iran or Syria against Turkey. On the whole, he said, requiring such sophisticated weapons is a wise thing for Jordan which must be ready at any time to defend itself from any attack.

A writer in Al Dustour described a visit to Jordan by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal as yet another step towards ending inter-Arab differences and paving the ground for reconciliation among Arab states. The visit, coming amid crucial developments in this region is a favourable response to Jordan's ongoing efforts to reestablish solid relations among Arab countries, strained over the past years due to side-differences and disputes, said Mohammad Kawash. Visits and consultations are vital elements for creating the right atmosphere for such reconciliation among leaders and a wise step towards the resumption of normal and strong ties among their peoples, he added. The writer expressed hope that Prince Saud's visit will help establish the right foundation for a new Arab Order in the region.

The View from Academia

Wasita: What's bad about it?

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubet

AMONG THE serious problems on which our society has to take a firmer stand, if it is to proceed in the direction of development and progress more speedily and smoothly than it is proceeding at this moment and to excel in its overall performance, is what is universally known as favouritism — or what is most widely referred to in our part of the world as wasita.

Favouritism, of course, takes several forms. Some are justifiable, understandable and even constructive; others are unjustifiable, objectionable and harmful.

In the former category, which most of today's civil societies not only tolerate and condone but also practice widely and even institutionalise, one may include affirmative action policies, humanitarian gestures of all types, recommendation letters or phone calls of all sorts, business lunches, lobbying, brainstorming speeches or meetings, commercials, propaganda campaigns, etc. Whenever individuals and institutions are making an exception for a person or a group, no matter what the rationale is, they are in fact practising a form of favouritism. Throughout human history, there has been very little ultimate objectivity, and one may argue that favouritism is deeply embodied in human psyche and behaviour. And just as some philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists refer to man as a thinking or social animal, one can safely say that man is a subjective, pliable or even fickle animal. You can drive a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. With man, you can do both. In this particular sense, and at this particular level, favouritism seems to be both inevitable and natural, and under certain circumstances, it may in fact be viewed as not only necessary but also wise and noble.

But favouritism can also be extremely negative. Wasita, as practised in our society, is largely subversive and destructive. I say "largely" because, at times, individuals or institutions cannot but resort to it in order to support a deserving person or a group of persons (who cannot otherwise have a fair chance) and thus contribute to a good cause. What would you do, for instance, if an outstanding former student or acquaintance of yours were applying to a scholarship or a position and you knew from previous incidents and experience that the person in charge was easily influenced by "mediators" and people of "good will"? In the majority of cases, however, wasita (which literally means the resort to personal connections or "mediators" to influence a certain decision and which, as a term, is almost always used pejoratively in our daily discourse) is the unethical and illegal means through which

mediocre, poor, opportunistic and undeserving individuals achieve what they cannot achieve on the basis of merit and in fair and square competition.

Despite our public condemnation of it and efforts to fight it, wasita is still practised in our society. It is true that some of our institutions have come up with effective ways of battling and preventing it from happening, and it is also true that many individuals in our society do all in their power to resist pressure to engage and succumb to it. But some institutions are still heavily influenced by it, and many individuals among us not only easily bow to family and peer pressure but also engage in wasita wholeheartedly and unreservedly and often brag in public about the role they play in it.

One is not talking here about the need to know the butcher personally, or to know someone who knows the butcher personally, to be able to buy the piece of meat one desires to buy; or the need to know the vegetable seller, "service" driver, carpenter, mechanic, janitor, garbage collector — forms of wasita which tell much about our present-day social behaviour and culture. No. One is talking about forms which are more serious and more immediately damaging, forms related to the practices of many of our public servants and public institutions. If you go to almost any of our public-service establishments with the aim of conducting the simplest of business, chances are you will encounter more obstacles than necessary and waste more time than is required if you do not know anyone. But wasita also extends to encompass decisions about scholarships, fellowships, training courses, promotions, secondment and (of course) appointment.

What is bad about wasita? Obviously, many things. I wish, however, to highlight the following:

— As wasita is sought in the majority of cases to give a push to the mediocre, poor and undeserving among us, the presence or influence of such incompetent individuals in many of our public establishments increases at the expense of the presence or influence of the competent, outstanding and excellent individuals. Over the years, this unhealthy phenomenon has spread and flourished, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that many of the poor and incompetent occupy the center, while many of the competent and excellent have been extremely marginalised. Annually, an A-student and a D-student graduate from our universities with a bachelor's degree. The former has his qualifications and God (as the saying goes); the latter has an influential family member. Who gets appointed first or chosen for a scholarship? The D-student. Notice that we

are not talking about the choice between an A-student and a B-student. It is a choice between the very excellent and the very poor. Wasita in our society is that bad.

— What happens when you choose the D-student over the A-student? Many things happen. The first thing is that you are obviously teaching the D-student to disrespect regulations, laws, distinction and fair competition. What justification do you give the D-student for the preference you have given him, other than the sad fact that the more influential wins? None. How does this D-student — who is now an employee at one of our vital public institutions, who gets promoted as quickly and swiftly as he or she has been appointed (and on the same basis), and who is now a decision maker — grow to be? A law breaker, a despoiler of distinction and excellence and a staunch supporter of mediocrity? Whom is he going to appoint or promote in the glorious department or section he is now in total charge of?

— What happens to the A-student — who is probably still unemployed, living in psychological hell because he has not gotten a scholarship he has applied for and lost to a D-student, or (ironically) finally employed in the department which the former D-student is a head of now? How does the A-student grow to be? How much faith does he have in social and institutional fairness and justice, how much respect does he have for his society and its institutions, and how much faith and loyalty do we expect of him? Ironically, he remains more committed and loyal, vexed though he is, than D. It is in his blood and his genes.

It may well be, of course, that such cases are not as widespread as many among us think. But they do exist. And they do give the opportunity for many people to question, doubt and lose faith in the integrity of many of our institutions and, unavoidably, of our society at large. And the way to deal with the situation is not to deny the existence of such cases (as some of our public officials often do) or attempt to minimise their pernicious implications but to admit their presence and confront the situation bravely.

I suggest that we include favouritism in the agenda of the national conferences and symposia on corruption which we have seen a heightened interest in holding recently. I also suggest that appointment, promotion and other similar decision be entrusted to committees (not to individuals) whose members are carefully selected (from the less subjective, pliable and fickle among us) and whose work and decisions are carefully reviewed by higher committees. This may alleviate this social and institutional malady a bit.

Washington warriors go back to work

By James Adams

PRESIDENT CLINTON signed legislation to restore the jobs and pay of hundreds of thousands of government workers, bringing to an end the longest government shutdown in the country's history.

Although the immediate crisis may be over after a compromise reached with the Republicans on Friday, the political fallout from the farcical row over how best to balance the budget will continue for weeks. Despite intense wrangling, the Republicans and Democrats are as far apart as ever on how deeply to slash taxes and how much to squeeze in savings from healthcare and other social programmes. And the battle has left two key Republican leaders — Bob Dole, the Senate leader, and Newt Gingrich, the house speaker, hissing venomously at each other.

Although government employees will begin trickling back to work tomorrow, the measure signed Saturday provides for pay only until January 26. The Republicans are warning that a new shutdown would begin if there is no agreement by then on a plan to balance the budget in seven years.

Returning government employees face a daunting backlog of work. The Veterans Affairs Department has 60,000 headstones to install at 114 cemeteries; the Health and Human Ser-

vices Department has a backlog of 250,000 requests for information to deal with; and there are also more than 200,000 passport applications that are waiting to be processed around the world. Much of the work will continue piling up: funding for many departments is still restricted and some workers will find themselves prevented from even making a phone call or putting a stamp on a letter. The national parks will reopen but park rangers will have to patrol on foot: there is no cash to pay for their petrol.

"This is wrong and it amounts to cruel and unusual punishment, not only for people who need these services but for all the rest of the people in this country who pay the taxes for them," said Mr. Clinton, who has successfully laid the blame for the row over the budget at the door of the Republicans.

Final agreement, however, depends on Mr. Clinton producing his own detailed plan to balance the federal budget within the next seven years. While he has already agreed to do this, the White House does not want to be pinned down, preferring to spin out the process for as long as possible.

Since the money ran out on December 16, Republicans and Democrats have been playing a high-stakes game of chicken. In the

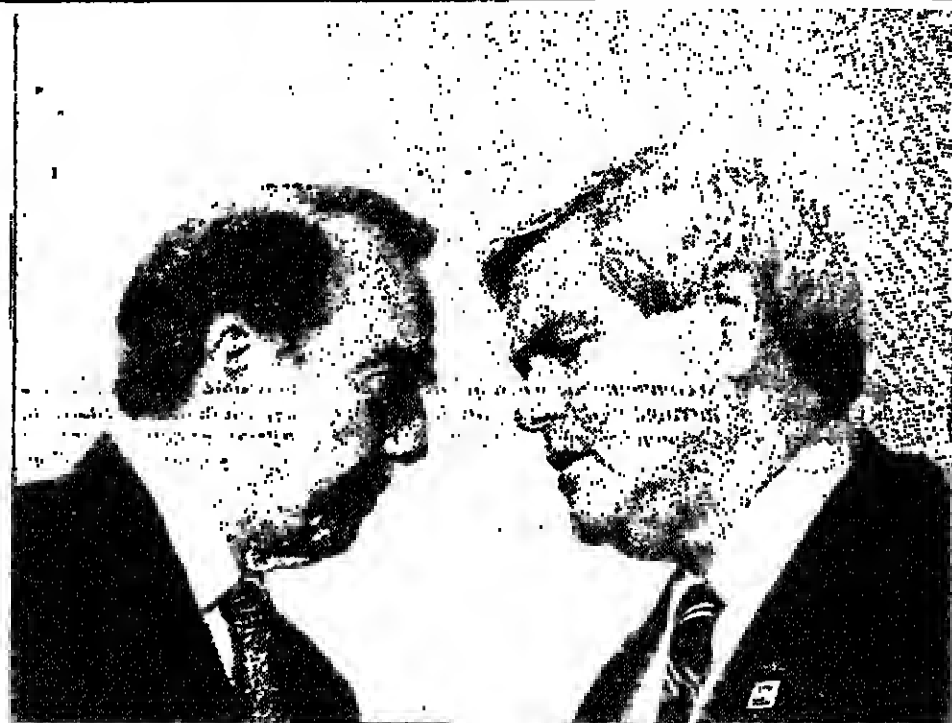
end, the White House played a more skilful hand, and it was the Republicans who blinked.

This was not a total capitulation but a compromise that partially lets Mr. Clinton off the hook while keeping the Republicans united behind Mr. Gingrich, architect of the confrontation.

The Republican strategy was to use laid-off workers to force Mr. Clinton to negotiate. In fact, it gave the president the perfect opportunity to portray the Republicans as heartless, with thousands of federal workers being sent home at Christmas with no money.

There were numerous reports of the humiliation America was experiencing abroad as embassies were forced to close their doors or operate with a skeleton staff. The Vietnamese government threatened to cut off power to the American embassy because the electricity bill was overdue. The Cuban truck company supplying diplomats in Havana with drinking water refused to make any more deliveries. The State Department warned that it would soon run out of money to pay the contractors that run its worldwide communications network.

In the end it was Mr. Dole, the likely Republican candidate for president, who helped push through an agreement. His party



It ain't over yet: Dole and Gingrich are not reconciled — and the government could shut down again

was being hammered in the polls with 44 per cent blaming Congress and only 33 per cent blaming Mr. Clinton for the shutdown. Since November, Mr. Clinton's disapproval ratings for his handling of the crisis have risen from 42 per cent, while the Republicans' disapproval ratings have also risen — from 72 per cent to 74 per cent.

Mr. Dole is a natural conciliator who regards Mr. Gingrich's fire-brand approach with distaste. His chief concern was that holding out for a complete deal might go backfire on the Republicans that his own presidential ambitions

would be terminally damaged. On Tuesday he persuaded his Senate colleagues to pass a measure that would put the government back to work. With that breach in the Republican front, Mr. Gingrich was left with little choice but to make the best face-saving deal possible.

It took two days of tough talking to the militant Republican freshmen for Mr.

Gingrich to persuade them to compromise or face political oblivion. At some stage, however, Mr. Clinton will have to bite the bullet and produce his own detailed plan to balance the budget. Failure to do so will hand a propaganda gift to the Republicans, who will accuse him of fiscal irresponsibility.

The Sunday Times

LETTERS

What about people?

To the Editor:

I READ WITH interest the exchange of views between Ammar Khammash (Jordan Times, Dec. 17, 1995) and the Press Office of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (Jordan Times Dec. 19, 1995) on how to strike a balance between the promotion of tourism and the preservation of the environment and of archaeological sites in Um Qais and Wadi Rum. Mr. Khammash wrote of the need for sustainable tourism but without damage to the environment and to archaeological remains and complained of the marginalisation of experts and scientific work. In its reply, the Ministry of Tourism affirmed its commitment to the environment but wrote of the need for "tidying up" cultural heritage sites to make them "accessible" and "intelligible" to visitors.

I recapitulate the two arguments, simply to point out that neither one even once mentions the people who live in these sites and what is becoming of them in all this upheaval. Or do citizens and their livelihoods somehow not count in this debate? Without diminishing the importance of natural and historical resources, we should not forget that these count for very little without the development of human resources.

While there is no easy answer as to how such sites should be managed, ongoing dialogue and cooperation between "experts", government agencies and the communities involved is essential. The people of these communities are directly affected by tourism development, their means of livelihood (especially agricultural and pastoral) are being eroded, they see no clear alternative in the tourist industry and, worst of all, they have no idea what decisions are being taken and subsist entirely on rumours. They are the ones, and not the experts, who are truly marginalised in this process.

Adopting Mr. Khammash's terminology, it could be said that the inhabitants of Um Qais and Wadi Rum most probably see no place or future for themselves with either the horse or the cart.

Dr. Seteney Shami,
Anthropologist,
Cairo.

New Russian foreign minister is Middle East expert

Reuter

MOSCOW — Yevgeny Primakov, named on Tuesday as Russia's new foreign minister, is a former key chief and journalist with a special knowledge of the Middle East.

Mr. Primakov, appointed by President Boris Yeltsin, was head of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) since December 1991 and was a member of the powerful security council.

He replaces Andrei Kozyrev, who resigned last Friday to take up a seat in the state Duma lower house of parliament.

Mr. Primakov, 66, speaks Arabic and English and was a special correspondent in the Middle East for the Communist Party daily Pravda between 1966 and 1970. He is also a member of the prestigious Academy of Sciences.

Mr. Primakov's appoint-

ment was something of a surprise. Asked about rumours that he could move to the ministry or become head of the security council, he told ITAR-TASS news agency late last month: "My current work is fully satisfying."

Asked why he had taken the intelligence job, he said: "I understood very well where I was going. Intelligence is the state's most important mechanism. I thought it was an honour to work there and I could successfully use the political and analytical experience I gathered in the Academy of Sciences."

A member of the security council since October 1993, Mr. Primakov also enjoyed good relations with last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

But even under late Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, Mr. Primakov was regarded as one of the leadership's top experts on Eastern foreign policy.

He was elected to the Soviet parliament in 1988 and chaired the chamber between June 1989 and September 1990.

In 1990, he joined Mr. Gorbachev's council and held talks with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, whom he had met in 1969 as a journalist, on the eve of the Gulf war.

Mr. Primakov was a member of the Soviet Communist Party from 1959 until it was abolished. He was a full member of the party's central committee and, briefly, a non-voting member of the policy-making politburo.

In January 1990 he was sent to Baku, capital of then Soviet Azerbaijan, to try mediate in nationalist unrest, but was booted outside Communist Party headquarters when he tried to speak. Moscow then sent in troops and tanks to stop the disturbances.

In the 1970s he was deputy head of the influential

Institute of World Economics and International Relations and also headed the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies.

He spent his childhood and youth in Tbilisi, capital of Georgia. He graduated from the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies in 1953 and began work as a correspondent for state television and radio.

He is a widower with one daughter and grand-daughter.

In an interview with the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper last month, he said he relaxed by reading detective stories or watching television and gets to swim once a week.

Mr. Primakov told TASS his work in intelligence had affected his lifestyle. "I have practically no free time. Unfortunately, I rarely get to the theatre. Fortunately, I still have my friends, but we cannot go to restaurants."

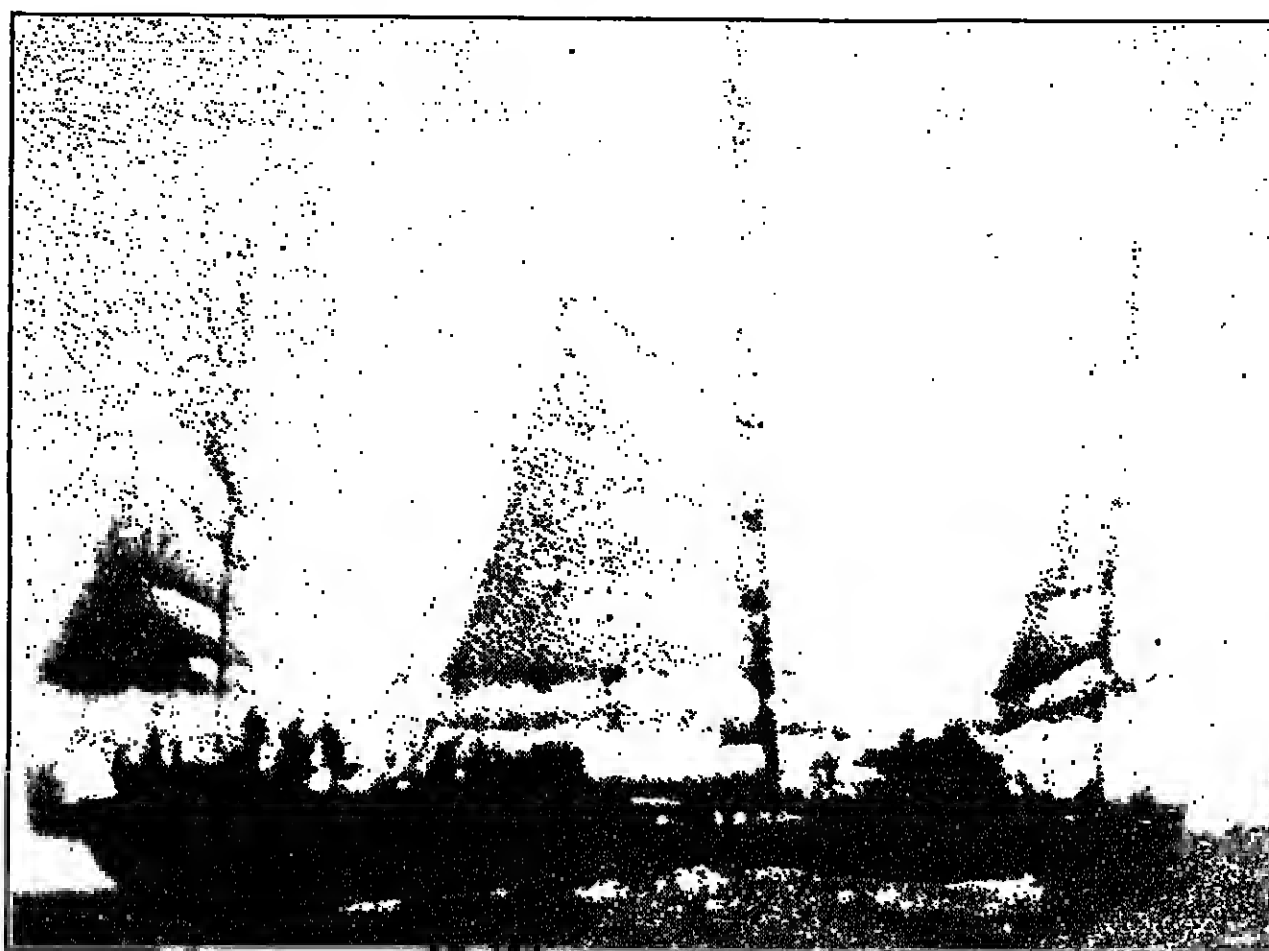
Society on the Move

Port of call: Jordan

Happy to be back in Jordan again is Farid Rahman, who assumed his duties as Regional Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Middle East and North Africa Regional Office (MENARO). He succeeds Sarajini Vintachi who retired last November. Mr. Rahman, a Pakistan national, left Jordan for a UNICEF posting in Sudan after his 1987-1989 tenure as Deputy Regional Director of MENARO. In Sudan, he was UNICEF Representative from 1989 to 1992. During that period he travelled extensively through the region. He then served as UNICEF representative in Beijing with responsibility also for Mongolia. China is one of the largest UNICEF country programmes in the world. Mr. Rahman has a bachelors degree in law from the University of Peshawar, a degree in development economics from the London School of Economics and Political Sciences and a master's degree in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the U.S. The 56-year-old Mr. Rahman began his UNICEF career in Jakarta in 1976. Prior to that he held several senior positions with the government of Pakistan from 1964 to 1974. He was joined by his wife Nilofar and youngest daughter Alia (14) who arrived from Pakistan on Wednesday. The couple's son Khurram (26) is in the masters of business administration programme at Cornell University in the state of New York. Daughter Aisha (23), who graduated from the Amman Baccalaureate School (ABS) in 1989, completed her undergraduate studies in China and is awaiting acceptance into a U.S. university to work towards a masters degree in public policy and international development. Her sister Alia will attend school at the ABS. Having spent four solid years in China, Mr. and Mrs. Rahman and Alia take some pride in their level of mastery of Chinese. For the couple, returning to Amman, they say, is like coming home. And the folks at the UNICEF office who knew them earlier are delighted to have them back. The Rahmans will no doubt renew old friendships and begin new ones during their second stay. We warmly welcome them back.

how we send them off.

TESTING THE WATERS: Talk of ships coming in. The Jordan Royal Ecological Diving Society (JREDS), initiated in 1994 by a group of young Jordanian divers who "felt the need to protect Agaba's rich marine life from further destruction and pollution," is awaiting the arrival in Agaba of the 82-foot Chinese junk, christened the *Heraclitus*. On this "research vessel" will be an international crew of 14 who are on a long-term research programme to study coral reefs and cultures, and provide a platform for seamanship and coral reef research training. The expedition was launched by the U.S.-based Planetary Coral Reef Foundation, an international non-profit, non-governmental organisation. The members of JREDS, about 100, have been active in their own right having conducted two "clean up dives," one on the national level in Agaba and the other on a regional level that included Egypt, Israel and Palestine. Part of these activities included lectures on safe diving and methods of collecting litter while diving. The arrival on Jan. 15 of *Heraclitus* will be celebrated with lectures and slide shows organised by Expedition Chief Christine Handie, who will also train two scientists who work closely with JREDS, Ahmad Abu Hilal and Salim Moghrabi, both marine biologists from the Marine Scientific Station in Agaba run under the auspices of the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University. The training will involve maintaining coral reef health and vitality research. As part of the expedition a marine life monitoring station will be set up and communication facilities will be installed for contacts with the Planetary Coral Reef Foundation. The JREDS is directed by an executive board of young professionals who enjoy diving as a sport but found that something needed to be done to protect Jordan's marine ecosystem. Those nine part-time conservationists are JREDS Chairperson Princess Basma Bint Ali, a captain in the Jordan Armed Forces at the Directorate of Women's Affairs; Vice Chairman Ali Bilbeisi, joint managing director of Associated Services Agencies; Khaled Kurdi, managing director of Advanced Engineering Technologies Corp.; Rajale Jouy, private construction manager; Muzayyan Hammoudi, quality assurance coordinator at Aramex; Munkiz Mehvar, manager, The Athlete Company; Mohammad Shaheen, general manager, City Express; Adnan Budeiri, manager Research Department of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature; and Bashar Dahabra, general manager at Unitech. As one of the JREDS objectives is to spread public awareness on the importance of preserving the natural heritage in the Gulf of Agaba, its members have arranged for an "open to the public day" on Friday, Jan. 19, with tours of the ship, exhibitions, video and slide shows and a visit to the monitoring station.



The research vessel, *Heraclitus*, named after the early Greek philosopher

UNITED THEY STAND: While there is cause to celebrate a UNICEF reunion, we also celebrate a UNICEF union. Two communications experts showed us they really know how to communicate when in late December they exchanged marriage vows. They are none other than Information Communications Officer for the UNICEF Area Office in Jordan Sima Bahous and Information Communications Officer for UNICEF in Yemen Ziad Rifai. Both worked earlier at Jordan Television, both went on to obtain their Ph.D.s in communications, and both taught at the Journalism and Mass Communications Department at Yarmouk University. How's that for compatibility? Dr. Bahous' affiliation with UNICEF began in June 1994. Prior to that she had been with the Noor Al Hussein Foundation as assistant to the president, and for many years was communications consultant to Her Majesty Queen Noor. Dr. Rifai began his UNICEF posting in Yemen in November 1994. Since their marriage in Amman, the newlyweds spent their honeymoon in Brussels and London, and returned to Amman to set up a temporary nest in the Turina apartment/hotel, which, they say, is "quite lovely." Dr. Rifai heads back to Sanaa on Friday. Dr. Bahous plans an taking a short leave from her job and joining her husband sometime next week. We missed Ziad sufficiently when he moved south, and Sima's departure will leave many of us at a genuine loss. But this very special couple deserve every possible good wish and that's

appointment as first deputy consul then consul in Basel, Switzerland. He returned to Rome for three years at the Directorate General of Political Affairs, then at the end of 1978 was appointed counsellor to the embassy in Washington, DC. His last foreign posting was as first counsellor in Bucharest, Romania. Prior to his appointment to Jordan (his first as an ambassador), Mr. Cerulli held several senior posts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, most recent of which was as head of the Bilateral and Multilateral Financial Cooperation Office. He and Mrs. Cerulli have two adult children pursuing their higher education. We welcome the Cerullis and wish the ambassador a happy birthday in Jordan on Feb. 2 when he turns 55.

LEARNING ON TOUR: With mid-year break, some universities piggy-back on the time off to conduct study tours abroad. One such tour has been organised by senior professors at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina in the U.S. Under the guidance of Charles A. Kimball, director of the Office of International Education and Donald L. Gordon, chairman of the Political Science Department and director of African/Asian Studies at the university, a group of undergraduates, mostly seniors and juniors and a few "outstanding" sophomores set out on a 6-week programme that includes visiting Syria, Jordan,

Palestine and Israel, then to the African continent to Kenya and Tanzania. Here in Jordan, among other institutions and persons, they visited the Royal Institute for Inter-faith studies and met board member, former Foreign Minister and political scientist Kamel Abu Jafer, board member and former ambassador, Walid Tash and Institute, Associate Director Randa Mukhar. AL al Bayr University President Adnan Bakhit, who happened to be visiting the institute, also joined in on the meeting. The students and their professors also visited the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan and earlier met with prominent columnist Rami Khouri. When they were not being lectured to, the students had an opportunity to exchange views about the stereotyping of Arabs in the West, images of America in the Arab World, the peace process, and other current issues particular to the Middle East region. An admittedly general impression of the students was that many of the people they spoke to were less than tolerant, a bit opinionated, and slightly heavy on the "what YOU should be doing is..." when what they really came for was to learn and engage in some academic exchange. But their trip to Petra on Wednesday should make up for any disappointment. And while they stayed in Amman at the new Carlton Hotel, perhaps some found comfort in the knowledge that that edifice once housed their country's embassy.

Jennifer Hamarnesh

Group tries to restore Arab college to original status

By Amy Henderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — At the time it was functioning, the Arab College on Jabal Mukkabit, south of Jerusalem, educated and trained what have become some of the most notable personalities in modern Palestinian and Jordanian history — Touqan Hindawi, Nicola Ziadah, Mohammad Nouri Shafiq, Qassem Rimawi, Munef Razaz, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra and Haidar Abdul Shafi. It was, at the height of its glory, the best Arab prep school in the region. Its graduates usually moved on to schools such as the American University of Beirut, the Egyptian University and later to Oxford, Cambridge and other prestigious British Universities.

Could history rewrite itself, the school might today be one of the finest institutions for higher learning in the Arab World. But the end of the British Mandate in Palestine and the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 led to the closure of this institute — the only one of its kind in the country — which was, at the time, well on its way to being recognised as a university. In the early fall of 1948, it fell under Israeli occupation.

Today, two committees are working to secure the return of the college's original facility to the Palestinian self-rule

authority, reopen its doors to Palestinian students (hopefully at its original site) and restore it to its primary status. The committees' members include prominent Jordanians of Palestinian origin, headed by Palestinian business magnate Hassib Sabbagh, and numerous diaspora Palestinians.

The idea to restore the college is not a new one, says Hassan Karmy, a former member of the college's board. Indeed, efforts to do so began in 1990, long before the possibility of returning the occupied territories to Palestinian rule seemed possible. But, says Mr. Karmy, — probably best remembered for his voice on "Saying upon Saying", an Arabic literature programme on the BBC's Arabic service — the two groups currently working on the restoration of the college have been spurred on by the prospect of peace and approaching final status negotiations.

The school was established in 1920 by the British as a training college for elementary teachers. Eventually the school exceeded its charter, evolving into a full secondary school and, in 1926, secondary students sat for the Palestinian matriculation exam. By 1934, the school had officially become the Arab College, and in 1939, students sat for Palestinian intermediate exams. The administration of the school

had, prior to 1934, taken the decision to push the school towards a standard of higher education with the intent to compensate for the lack of higher studies opportunities available to Palestinian youth and to compete with the Hebrew University, said Mr. Karmy.

"It was hoped," recounts Mr. Karmy, "that students of the Arab College would sit for the Palestinian BA, which was to be equivalent of the BA offered by British universities. But this wasn't to be because the term of the Mandate ended."

At the outset of the ensuing Arab-Israeli war of 1948, Jabal Mukkabit and its institutions — the Arab College, the government house and an Israeli agricultural school — fell under the protection of the Red Cross. During the fights in August of that year, the Israelis took control of the building and it stayed under Israeli control since. Today the college's facility is known as the Moriah Centre, a guest house administered by the municipality of Jerusalem.

Working from Amman, committee members (Abdel Rahman Bushnaq, Walid Khalidi, Munzer Fahoum, Fatheh Qadoura and Mr. Karmy) have appealed to nearly every available source to put the issue of the Arab College on the agenda of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the inter-

national community, with plans to eventually ask the Israelis for their cooperation.

In the United States, the Welfare Development Fund (WDF) has committed to sponsoring and executing any preparatory studies (including a feasibility study completed late last year) and is spearheading fundraising efforts in the U.S.

Sometime last year, said Mr. Karmy, the committee approached the Red Cross headquarters in Switzerland asking for the documents which would have placed the facility in its custody. Also, he says, he is hoping to generate substantial British interest in the college's revival.

"After all," he stated, "it is in their interest — it was their initiative." But beyond that, says Mr. Karmy, the British, along with the rest of the world, have a "moral obligation" to support the project.

"Education should be a priority in the Palestinian territories if people want this peace to work," he said. "We need to develop our human resources to see it be successful."

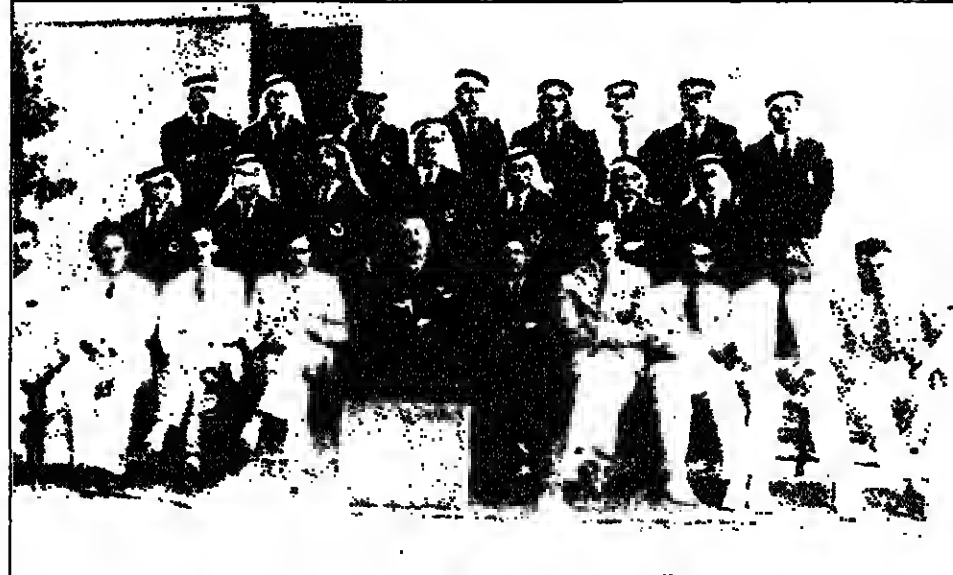
Mr. Karmy added that the Amman committee is appealing to the PNA to put the issue on the agenda during the upcoming final status negotiations. Moreover, Mr. Karmy said, they have appealed to UNESCO, the Jordanian government and the Palestinian

ministry of education in the self-rule territories.

Five years on the outset of the campaign, however, its success seems small in measure. The feasibility study estimated the cost of such an endeavour to be upwards of \$6 million. Both Mr. Khalidi and Mr. Karmy say that money will be no object — financing does in fact exist for the project, and mobilising further resources should be no trouble, they say, given the considerable "networking capabilities" of both the WDF and the Amman committee chairman. The problem, he says, is political.

Legally speaking, Jabal Mukkabit still falls into the "no-man's land" of 1948, under the jurisdiction of the U.N. But, says Mr. Khalidi, the mount is not protected under Oslo I and II (agreements) and therein lies the problem. This land will not be considered during final status negotiations unless the PNA agrees to raise the issue.

According to a source at the British Consulate in Jerusalem, Mr. Karmy's appeal, registered with the consul there, hasn't gone beyond consulate doors. The Red Cross, while sympathetic to the cause, has produced the documents that showed the Arab College to be one of five civilian areas under Red Cross protection during 1948, but head of the Red Cross delegation in Amman



Yves Giuvannoni said no documents exist that put the Arab College specifically in Red Cross custody thus showing ownership of property. Only the government house enjoyed that status, he said. The committee has had no official response from either the Jordanian government or the PNA, which, in the case of the latter, is "discouraging," said Mr. Khalidi, especially since "we have been in contact with them since 1993". Anis Qassem, a legal advisor to Yasser Arafat based in Amman, argued that "this should not be surprising." For the Jordanians, it would open more problems on the issue of Jerusalem

than it would solve, and for the PNA, it may jeopardise their interests in more important areas of the city.

The committees seem instead to be relying on an extraordinary amount of goodwill on Israel's behalf.

"We feel that the Israelis would be willing to cooperate on this issue," says Mr. Khalidi. "The tendency is to have new ideas in Jerusalem. Besides, there is no other Arab institution in south Jerusalem — Arabs had little there prior to 1948. In any case, we only have about five per cent of the city — why can't we have the school?"

But an Israeli embassy offi-

cial in Amman pointed out that Israel may not share the same enthusiasm for the endeavour. "There is now a housing centre there," the official explained, "so if the college is to be reopened, it will have to be done on other premises."

For its part, the committee remains hopeful. "We could raise the issue at the (International Higher) court of justice," said Mr. Khalidi. "International law is in our favour. But the thing is we don't want to challenge anybody; not the PNA, not Israel. (Israel) left the Golan. It left the Sinai, and one day, we think we'll have our college."

Intel launches one more processor

By Jean-Claude Elias

INTEL, THE main U.S. designer and manufacturer of the microprocessor that powers personal computers has just announced the commercial launch of its new baby — the P6. Personal computer users have hardly had the time to catch their breath after the Pentium broke all sales records last year. Fact is not even all users have been able to invest in the Pentium. The vast majority of them still runs on 486 processors and a minority has to live with old, die-hard 386 machines.

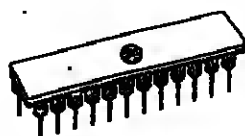
The P6 is the fastest of Intel's current range. It crowns the series of 386, 486, Pentium (586) and can be considered as the 686, although Intel has introduced it rather as the "Professional Pentium." Two of the company's officials made a summary presentation of the P6 last year in Amman on the occasion of METS 95, Jordan's annual computer and technology show, leaving most of the attendants anxiously waiting for the official release.

There are reasons to believe that experienced users won't rush to buy P6-based computers immediately, especially if they are already equipped (and happy) with Pentium machines.

Those still using 486 systems may consider the leap. All of them however will have to follow the trend sooner or later.

It has been proven, and previously discussed in this very column, that a given computer will yield its full power only if all its elements are taken to the limit. This means, for instance, that before upgrading a 486 to a Pentium, it is wise to ensure one has enough memory, hard disk, and so forth. A

chip talk



486-DX4-100 with 16 MB of memory will perform better than a Pentium 90 with 4 MB, in most cases.

Similarly, if you are using a Pentium with an MB of RAM (memory), you may want to increase the RAM to 16 MB before considering a P6. It could prove to be more rewarding and less expensive. Memory is just one of the elements one can upgrade.

The wise will first check in what way they can improve the performance of the machine they already own before deciding for one based on a newer processor. It is only when all the possibilities of one's system have been explored and used that the purchase of a totally new machine should be considered.

In spite of all that makes sense, there will still be PC lovers, computer addicts that will do anything to acquire a new, faster processor. If it makes them (and Intel) happy, I do not see anything wrong in such doing. It will, at least, allow Intel to continue their research for more powerful products!

On paying lip service to a better life

By: Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

IT IS becoming clear that the continuing propaganda of paying lip service to a utopian way of life by analysts, writers and officials cannot be sustained as a policy for the betterment of the lives of the ordinary citizens. The same citizens who go about their daily business amongst the, by now, all too familiar cries of injustice, unemployment and poverty.

And, as one would expect, from within the folds of a treacherous life on now flooded streets and puddle-ridden motor ways, comes a voice that reminds us of our past. A past that seemed, at times, to be best left undisturbed for the interests of all concerned.

But maybe, just maybe, and for the sake of a clear run towards a promising future, our past has to be confronted, any outstanding controversies resolved, and the whole thing laid down to rest once and for all.

For surely a fresh new direction cannot come about unless the old and rusty ways of doing things are done away with. The criteria for choosing people that would be entrusted with looking after the interests of the country have also got to evolve by as much as they can without snapping and while bearing in mind the ways of our society. And this would imply that change at the national level must be preceded by change at the local and tribal levels in terms of equal rights for all and an acknowledgement of these rights.

We must do away with those amongst us who have taken to dishing out a sermon or a speech as if theirs were the mother of all speeches. Speeches that only aspire at doing nothing more than paying lip service to a cocooned vision of a better future. And not even in an election year! But, if it does no harm, then it must do some good. However trivial! For what is important is that the constituents believe that someone appears to be doing the job they were sent to do in the first place.

In spite of all this, one can only say that there is no one right way of going about to achieve objectives. This is because differences in opinions and several schools of thought provide a wide ranging choice of solutions ready to be put to the test in the hope of finding the "solution". So who can claim to have

all the right answers? Nobody really! But the whole point of instigating a debate is to try to reach a middle ground where those promising individuals among the future generations can start laying a solid foundation worthy of the millennium.

Again, regrettably, all this is a long way away from materialising purely because bad habits are the hardest to break. And a way of life imprinted in a society for so many decades cannot be changed overnight with a mere stroke of pen.

Hence the frustration! There are feelings of anger simmering below the surface, waiting for someone to pull the trigger or create a distraction to keep an uneasy population entertained, bemused, and unaware of the tight rope being wrapped around it.

We need to start defining who we are as a people and as a nation. And we start doing that by acknowledging that sitting on the fence and picking sides every now and then will not do any more.

But to genuinely take some steps forward, we need to be strong enough, have trust in ourselves and confidence in our abilities to deliver on the promises of prosperity that we have been making for so long. We have to keep a tight grip on inflation and pricing, see our farmers through their present predicaments, ensure employment opportunities for graduates of the newly introduced - and much publicised - fields of study such as speech therapy, complement persistence and reuke carelessness, educate our people to properly handle the piece of technology that is "the car", instil in people an appreciation of "professionalism" and the moral codes that go hand in hand with being a professional, help people truly appreciate the essence of civility and culture, and urge them to care for and believe in ideas, ideals and visions of a better life.

Again, all this is not going to be easy. For as with just about everything else, an infrastructure has to be first put in place. An infrastructure of trust, honesty, faith, hope and love. Trust between people and those who govern over them. Honesty on the part of those who govern. And faith among all. Faith in a better future.

Let us not stray into the path of so many countries around the world where a growing disillusionment with politics and politicians has come to mean that not that many people, especially young voters, are bothered to either vote or take politicians seriously anymore.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

PROVERBS & Sayings

- ** A close mouth catches no flies.
Lisanak hisanak: in sontohu Sanak, wa'in khontohu Khanak.
- ** A deformed body may have a beautiful soul.
Robba jismen mushawwah damma nafsan Jamila.
- ** A good wife is a Godly prize.
Khoz al-asseelah walaw kanat alal hassirah.
- ** A dog's tail is always crooked.
Tha'ab al-kalb a' waj' wa'law wada'tohu fee alf qalib.
- ** A full purse never lacks friends.
In zada mali fakollon-nass khillani.
- ** A hungry man, an angry man.
Indal buoton ta'dee al-ukool.
- ** As laughter increases, respect decreases.
Man kathora mizabohu, qallat bayatohu.

BRUSH YOUR MEMORY

FOLLOWING is a picture of a horse with numbers indicating each part of its body. The names of the parts are given below according to the numbers in the drawing. You have only FIVE minutes to study the picture and then try to memorise as many points as you can. They count 40.

SCORE:

35-40 Excellent
30-34 V. Good

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

MOHAMMAD A. SHUQAIR

25-33 Good
20-24 Fair

- Forelock 2. Cheek bone 3. Nostril 4. Chin groove 5. Throat 6. Jugular groove 7. Shoulder 8. Breast 9. Elbow 10. Knee 11. Cannon bone 12. Coronet 13. Heel 14. Pastern 15. Chestnut 16. Girth 17. Chest 18. Abdomen 19. Sheath 20. Shannon 21. Fellock 22. Hoof 23. Hollow of heel 24. Hock 25. Gaskin 26. Sifle 27. Buttock 28. Dock 29. Thigh 30. Croup 31. Haunch 32. Flank 33. Loins 34. Back 35. Ribs 36. Withers 37. Mane 38. Crest 39. Axis 40. Atlas.

JOKES

— Mother: Why are you jumping up and down?
Milly: When I took my medicine I forgot to shake the bottle.

— "Which hand do you use to wipe your nose?"
"Actually I always use a tissue. It's much more hygienic!"

— Hotel Guest: Can you give me a room and a bath?
Porter: I can give you a room, my lady, but you'll have to

bathe yourself!

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

- Where are these places situated — the Cenotaph; the Hermitage; Escorial; Mount Vernon; Topkapi?
- Of which country was this person president — Carmona; Tubman; Mannerheim; Abdes-Salam Aref; Vargas?
- Give 5 words ending with "graph" and 5 others beginning with the letter "x".
- What is Haggis?

KIDS' CORNER

(A) A MEMORABLE DAY

MY most unforgettable experience was when I lost my passport. It was Sunday. I was in the school. Our class teacher had told us to bring the passports because she wanted to take full names and addresses. She asked one girl to collect all the passports and bring them to her. After she had finished checking all the passports, she distributed them asking everyone if they had got their passports back. I was the only one to stand up and say that I had not got my passport. The teacher asked everyone to check their bags and see if they had taken my passport by mistake. I started

trembling and tears rolled down my eyes. The kind teacher told me not to worry and that she would find my passport. It was time to go home. I was taking out all the books from my desk when I suddenly noticed my passport lying there. I remembered that I had not submitted it while others had. Still I was very happy that I had found it. I will never forget this experience in my life.

"TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND THINGS WILL TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES!"

(B) COLOUR IT YOURSELF

Those who are interested in painting can now try their hands and start colouring these beautiful pictures. Do it in your spare time and after finishing all your school tasks. I am sure your pictures will be highly appreciated.

PUZZLE ME!

PUT three letters in front and the same three letters in the same order behind each of the following groups of letters to form words.

ERTAINM
ENTIALN
ERGRO
ACHA
SH
AU
X

Thursday, Jan. 11, 1996

- 1:00 Hurricanes
- 1:15 Fireman Sam
- 1:45 My Secret Identity
- 2:02 NBA
- 3:05 The New Leave It To Beaver
- 3:30 Adventures Of The Old West
- 4:30 Gillette World Sport Special
- 5:00 French Programme
Sophie Et Virginie
- 5:30 Varieties
Le Monde Est A Vous
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
Archimede
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 Carol And Company
- 8:00 Magazine 01 (Documentary)
- 8:15 The Album Show
- 9:10 The New Avengers
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Movie — "North Beach And Raw Hide"
Starring: William Shatner & Tate Donovan
- 12:00 Matlock (Mini-series) Ep. 2

Friday, Jan. 12, 1996

- 1:00 The Little Mermaids
- 1:30 Beethoven
- 1:40 Bush School
- 1:50 Lift-Off
- 2:15 Super Carrier
- 3:05 Goldrush In Alaska
- 4:05 Wonder Why
- 4:30 Give Us A Clue
- 5:00 French Programme
Sophie Et Virginie
- 5:30 Film
Tati Danifie
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
Sports Et Musique
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 Short Story Cinema
- 8:00 Natural Wonders Of Europe
- 8:45 America's Funnest People
- 9:10 Widows (Ep. 2)
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Second Chances (Drama)
- 11:30 Feature — "The Sting"
Starring: Paul Newman & Robert Redford

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Saturday, Jan. 13, 1995

- 2:00 Moomins
- 2:30 Wish Kid
- 3:00 Harry And The Hendersons
- 3:25 Blue Heelers
- 4:00 Voyagers
- 5:00 French Programme
Ordy
- 5:15 Children Programme
Les Badabocks
- 5:30 Serie
Fruit Et Legumes
- 6:00 Serie
Cest Mon Histoire
- 7:00 Le Journal
Magazine
- 7:15 Fant Pas Rever
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 Major Dad
- 8:00 The Stamp Of Greatness
- 8:25 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 9:10 The Glass Virgin
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Feature: "Hearts On Fire"
Starring: Roy Barkey & Rohyn Lively
- 11:50 Behaving Badly (Part 4)

Sunday, Jan. 14, 1996

- 2:00 The Flintstones
- 2:30 Droopy Master Detective
- 3:00 Family Plyhouse
- 3:10 Mac And Muley
- 3:30 Pugwall's Summer
- 4:00 Voyagers
- 5:00 French Programme
Ordy
- 5:15 Children's Programme
Les Badabocks
- 5:30 Serie
Fruits Et Legumes
- 5:50 Varieties
Jean-Michel Jarre
- 7:00 Le Journal
Magazine
- 7:15 Sports Et Musique
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 Are You Being Served

- 8:00 Cinema, Cinema
- 8:25 The Bold & The Beautiful
- 9:10 Women Of The World
- 9:35 Heartbeat
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Counterstrike
- 11:15 The American Chart Show
- 12:00 Stay Lucky

Monday, Jan. 15, 1996

- 2:00 Shelby Duvall's Bedtime Stories
- 2:30 Richie Rich
- 3:00 Playabout
- 3:15 Bustin' Loose
- 3:40 Animals Of The Mediterranean
- 4:00 Voyagers
- 5:00 French Programme
Ordy
- 5:15 Children Programme
Les Badabocks
- 5:30 Serie
Les Compagnons De L'Aventure
- 5:50 Magazine
C'Est Pas Sorcier
- 6:20 Family Programme
L'Ecole Des Fans
- 7:00 Le Journal
Magazine
- 7:15 Cinq Sur Cinq
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 McHale Navy
- 8:00 Invention-
- 8:25 Hawaii Five-O
- 9:10 Russia — The Missing Years
"The Russian Civil War" Part 2
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Anna (Drama)
- 11:10 Taurus Rising
- 12:00 Ellen

Tuesday, Jan. 16, 1996

- 2:00 Captain Planet
- 2:30 Jonny Quest
- 2:50 Spirit Of Adventure
- 3:40 Scientific Eye
- 4:30 Voyagers
- 5:00 French Programme

- Ordy
- 5:15 Children Programme
Les Badabocks
- 5:30 Serie
Les Compagnons De L'Aventure
- 6:00 Medical Magazine
Savoir Plus Sante
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
Ushuaia
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 You Bet Your Life
- 8:00 The Secret Of The Treasure Islands
- 8:25 Hawaii Five-O
- 9:10 99-1 (Police Drama) Ep. III
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 I'll Take Manhattan Ep. 6
- 11:15 Feature: "Angel"
Starring: Cliff Gorman & Suzan Tylerell

Wednesday, Jan. 17, 1996

- 2:00 The Flintstones
- 2:30 Speed Racer
- 3:00 Bill Nye The Science Guy
- 3:30 Amazing Stories
- 4:00 Voyagers
- 5:00 French Programme
Sophie Et Virginie
- 5:30 Serie
Des Heros Ordinaires
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
Sports Et Musique
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 Anything For A Laugh
- 8:00 The Nature Of Things
- 8:25 Hawaii Five-O
- 9:10 Girl Friday
"Joanna Lumley"
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Prism
- 10:45 Airwolf (Drama)
- 11:20 The Silk Road
- 12:30 Second Thoughts

Side splitting

Comedian Abed Mawaffi is a hit at Beit Liessin. But his stand-up style is less popular in Baka Al-Gharbiya

By Tirzah Agassi

"In Hebrew," says Abdul Mawaffi — Israel's, and perhaps the world's, first Arab stand-up comic — "when you're bowled over by something, you say 'Elohim gadol'." His audience at Tel Aviv's Beit Liessin nods in agreement.

"In English you say 'My God'." He pauses. "Now in Arabic," the sentence is given added weight, "one says 'Allahu akbar!'"

"I was in Petah Tikva, a while back, at the central bus station, when for the first time in my life I saw a double-decker bus." His eyes widen. "Wow!" I said. "Allahu akbar!..." And suddenly everybody ducked for cover."

The punch line elicits a knowing laugh from an audience exuberantly alert to the threat of suicide bus bombings.

Mawaffi's entrance into the mad dialogue of stand-up was literally through the back door. He was 25 in January '94 when he checked in at the kitchen of the old Camel Comedy Club at Tel Aviv's harbour. With him he carried crates of fresh produce from his father's grocery store.

Entering into the spirit of the place he offered manager Guy Hagi the receipt with a mock threat: "Sign here... or I'll blow up your place," adding cheerily, "and when an Arab says that, he means it!"

The assembled staff did a double take, which quickly turned into a laugh. And Mawaffi was invited to try the stage on karaoke night. After just two tries he was on the bill. By Purim he'd earned a plum part in the stand-up Megilla — playing Mordechai, the Jew.

The next day Baruch Goldstein gunned down 29 Muslims in Hebron's Tomb of the Patriarchs.

Journalists on hand at the widely publicised stand-up Megilla pined Mawaffi with questions.

"My answers weren't funny," he says, sitting in a trendy Sheinkin Street cafe the week after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination.

He is 26 now, a bundle of hyperactive energy, a young and upcoming celebrity. He is also cute. Pretty girls get goofy when they say hello. Brown men get that bashful

"Haven't I seen you on TV?" Look. Abed is in. He laps it up. But, like anyone who lives by his wits, he knows he's only as good as his last joke — or his response to the next calamity.

"Everybody asks me: 'Where do you belong?' I want to belong where I live. I live in Tel Aviv. North Tel Aviv. I'm a Tsfoni (a North Tel Avivian, the ultimate Israeli yuppie). An Arab Tsfoni!" He tosses off the paradox with puffy irony, followed by an "is that funny?" Look.

It is funny, and is illuminated by the delight that Mawaffi manages to find in his often less-than-delightful life as a "crossover."

"I've lived in this city for 13 years. I started working at my father's store on Basel Street when I was 13, coming in by bus after school from my village of Baka Al Gharbiya, in the Triangle."

He becomes intensely serious, explaining what it's like to see, but not be seen,

telling how Jewish Israelis prod him like a curious object. "They ask me things I'd never ask them."

For example, "One guy, when he found out I was an Arab, actually asked me 'Are you clean?' Clean, as in physically clean. What

can I say? I'm not angry. But I am offended. I am hurt."

Meanwhile, according to an IBA news probe of his village, there are also those back home who are offended by his actions on the stand-up stage. ("The vil-

lagers) don't really understand it yet. They think I'm putting my own people down. I want to work a lot more in the Arab sector, but so far I've only done a handful of shows there. People don't yet understand the interaction of stand-up

there. But this is not to say that there is no satire in the Arab world.

"There is great satire in countries like Syria, Egypt and Jordan," Mawaffi insists. "Israelis think that we have no culture. But they are wrong. The satire is

political, yes in Syria!" He illustrates with a skit based on the fact that the name Assad means lion.

"It's hysterically funny. You can see satirical plays here in Israel in videos that are for rent and for sale. I've learned plenty from Arab satirists. But traditionally they come from a point of view that the political battle has already been lost. They are the underdog. They sting from underneath. In Israel, because it is freer, you can say things up front."

Take for example the interactions at the Comedy Club lineup at Beit Liessin last weekend. The crowd was predominantly Jewish twentysomethings with a smattering of vociferous "oldies but goodies."

Comic Shira Cohen had a brilliant, nerve-biting moment when she took back all the barbs she had previously thrown at inflated TV personality Dan Shilon, explaining that she didn't want anybody to "God forbid" get any murderous

ideas. "Notice how quiet you all got, when I said that?" she challenged the sober audience.

Eventually an evening that included Roy Levy's cellular-phone stand-up plus plenty of benignly unsavoury jokes about feminine hygiene ads was elegantly closed by Eyal Kitis who, during his banter with the audience, had learned that one member was a tombstone manufacturer. The evening's punch line was the tombstone-company jingle that Kitis elicited from a witty audience member.

There were jokes that flew. There were others that didn't. But it was definitely alive and kicking. And Abed, who shares his Tsfoni digs with the Comedy Club's managing partners Ben Zeigel and Guy Hagi was definitely right in there with the crowd.

Where did this cultural hejira begin? Perhaps when he was a kid listening to his now 38-year-old brother's Bob Dylan albums.

Last weekend, Mawaffi made light of a hard cuff on the back of the head aimed at him the previous night after a performance at a Jerusalem party. Mawaffi attributed it to Jerusalem's loyalty to the Betar soccer team. The audience laughter was pretty hollow.

Abed Mawaffi is walking a fine line, and he knows it. For luck, he always wears a black-gold cap which his mother, a Muslim moderate, brought back for him from Mecca. Hopefully he, an Arab who is very clear that "I live here in Israel," will eventually wear the cap in stand-up interactions with the more courageous luminaries of the Palestinian theatre.

"The highlight of my career so far," he says, "came after a show in front of 13-year-olds in Ramat Hasharon. One kid from a right-wing family wouldn't stop giving me a hard time. But a week later his teacher told me that the kid was so affected by our interaction that he went home and told his parents: 'Stop poisoning my mind with your racism. I cried.'"

The Jerusalem Post



Abed Mawaffi

Part pagan, part Christian, the magic statuary of Perm is a unique treasure

By Boris Bachorz
Agence France-Presse

PERM, Russia — Carved by largely unknown hands during five centuries, the wooden statues of Perm are moving testimony to the fervor of the Russian peasantry.

Blending pagan cults and Christianity, the 300 carvings at the Perm Gallery are a unique artistic treasure which has miraculously survived the intolerance of Communism and the mistrust of the Orthodox Church.

A smiling crucified Christ with Mongol features, and God personified as an engaging young man, show what liberties the anonymous artists of this region 1,200 kilometres east of Moscow have taken with the official canons of the church.

Which is hardly surprising, given that the sculptors, as far as one can tell, were unlettered peasants with only very sketchy notions of the contents of the Bible.

The mystery of the statues goes back far into the past, to the pagan traditions of the Finno-Ugric peoples who dwelt in this part of the Urals until the arrival of the Russians in the 15th century.

The Orthodox Church which implanted itself along with the Russian settlers found it had to come to terms with the pagan rites which were flourishing then.

The Voguly tribe, for instance, only accepted the Orthodox faith in 1715 on condition that its idols were given pride of place on the church altars. Such a compromise gave birth to a unique art which in point of fact violated the Orthodox ban on statuary, viewed as too close to the Latin "heresy" of the Catholics with their myriad statues.

Perm's art was handed down from generation to generation from the 15th to the 19th century. There is a 17th century saint Nicholas whose primitive features remind one of some traditional African works.

So does the Christ smiling on the cross, beatific because at last he is returning to the father. His Mongol looks are of course those of a large part of the local populace.

To start with, Russian icons served as models, with heads so much out of proportion to the rest of the body and the tapering silhouettes, but sources of inspiration became more diverse from the 18th century.

The sun spreading its rays out behind a curiously juvenile God shows baroque influence, brought here perhaps by merchants from the Ukraine or Belarus. There is a long-limbed Virgin Mary straight from Gothic times.

There is a rustic fervour to these carvings in pine or limewood, as vibrant as they are naive. To express suffering and compassion, the artists depict a pensive Christ in his cell awaiting execution, even though the Gospels relate no such episode.

The saga ends with Kiryanov, one of the few artists to be identified, who has sculpted whole armies of God with armed angels who look like the tsar of the time. Peter the Great.

Equivalent treasures are found in Moldova, Belarus, Argentina and Paraguay. The trope here should have been lost when the Bolsheviks took power and began closing the churches in 1917, but fortunately an enlightened art lover, one Serebrennikov, scoured the villages of the region by train and boat and on horseback in the 1920s and 1930s, saving dozens of these works of art.

Sir Francis Drake's hero status to be restored

By Rory Mulholland

LONDON (AFP) — One of England's greatest seafaring heroes, Sir Francis Drake, is set to have his tattered reputation restored with a major exhibition coinciding with the 400th anniversary of his death.

The conqueror of the Spanish Armada will stand alongside Captain James Cook, who charted the Pacific Ocean, and Arctic explorer Sir John Franklin, who lost his life in an attempt to find the north-west sea passage, as one of "Britain's greatest explorers."

Recently Drake — renowned for his sang-froid

in playing howls as the Armada approached to attack England — has suffered attacks on his reputation, including an allegation of slave trading and accusations that he was little more than a pirate.

His image took an official blow last year when he was denied a celebratory stamp by the post office and in 1993 a plan for a replica ship named Sir Francis Drake as part of a theme park in the U.S. was sunk after claims by black activists — disputed by historians — that the sea dog was also a slave trader.

Now "blood, sea and ice" — a new exhibition which opens at the National Maritime Museum in

London on Jan. 28 — aims to put Drake in his place as a sailor "whose journeys and adventures on the high seas brought him lasting fame."

Drake is included with Cook and Franklin for his circumnavigation of the globe and for his part in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The exhibition features Drake's drum, a side drum believed to be the one carried on his last voyage and said to beat when England is in danger of invasion.

Eric Kentley, organiser of the exhibition, told the Times newspaper that the exhibition "is a tribute to three men who shaped the destiny of our country, and

the world, by battle, exploration, navigation and discovery."

"It is appropriate that it should open on the 400th anniversary of the death of Drake, who has achieved great notoriety in today's society for his acts of slave trading and piracy, but whose brilliant naval tactics led to the defeat of the Armada in 1588," he added.

However, this may still be another skirmish in the final battle for Drake's reputation.

This month's edition of the British magazine History Today examines the darker side of the sailor, recounting allegations of an unlawful execution during a voyage as well as challeng-

ing Drake's behaviour during the defeat of the Armada.

An article by John Cummins, of the Scottish University of Aberdeen, claims Drake deserted his comrades under Spanish fire after a battle.

It also quotes a contemporary account of Drake as "a tyrannous and cruel tyrant" guilty of "murder, venom, conceived hatred" and "most tyrannical blood spilling."

But Cummins qualifies his criticisms of Drake by pointing out that many who disliked him did so because of his humble upbringing and his unwillingness to defer to social superiors.

It's all the fashion to copy designs in Australia

By Kevin Morrison

SYDNEY (R) — Talented young Australian fashion designers are starting to forge reputations in New York, Paris, Milan and London, but at home, copying clothes designs from overseas is still highly fashionable.

Plagiarism in Australia's clothing industry, which has an annual turnover of A\$9 billion (US\$6.8 billion), is among the most widespread in the Western world. The copying frenzy was made possible by a mixture of lax laws and the previous protection of high tariffs, fashion industry sources said.

"It has been going on for a very long time. It's very deeply ingrained in the way Australians like to do business," Michael Hall, a lawyer specialising in copyright, told Reuters. "People have just grown up copying (designs)."

Students learn the practice

in fashion school, and during their apprenticeship they are told it is the way things are done, according to Hall, who works in the Sydney office of Baker McKenzie.

Until five years ago Australia had a very high tariff regime in the textile and footwear industry and no copyright existed for the print on a fabric, Mr. Hall said.

The result was that for years local manufacturers could openly copy fashionable overseas clothes because the importing of foreign clothes was too costly and there were no laws to break, according to Mr. Hall.

Since 1990, fashion designers can prosecute anyone who pirates the original design, and the number of culprits caught and prosecuted has been on the rise since the law change, Mr. Hall said.

However, only a small percentage of offenders are charged due to the costly

process of prosecution, he said.

Fashion industry sources said the biggest offenders were the fashion chain stores which sent people to Europe and New York to buy samples of the latest from the world's leading designers.

"The biggest culprits of the copying are the bigger franchise stores. The smaller designers cannot afford to fly over, buy the garments, come back and copy them," said one owner of a women's fashion store in Sydney.

In the past five years Australia has become far more conscious of fashion trends abroad, thanks in part to the quicker availability of overseas fashion magazines, said Michelle Cook, director of fashion store Billion Dollar Babes.

"Australian women read more fashion magazines per head of population than anywhere in the world," according to Amanda

Brettargh, chief executive of the Fashion Industry Association.

Overseas music videos and films combined with more foreign travel have also had a big influence on local fashion.

In contrast to the plagiarism, some talented local fashion designers, including Collette Dinnigan, Richard Tyler and Morrissey Edmiston, have been making a name for themselves overseas.

Australian designers have also broken through in Hollywood.

Lizzy Gardiner and Tim Chappel won the Costume Design Oscar last March for "The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert".

The rise of Australia's fashion designers has occurred during the past five years as the industry has undergone a major restructuring after a reduction of industry tariffs and the end of import quotas.

This forced the local industry to become more innovative, said the Fashion Industry Association's Brettargh.

"Local designers that are making their mark overseas now are young designers that are part of a generation with a different outlook, rather than just marketing what other people are doing," said Collette Dinnigan from her shop in Sydney.

Ms. Brettargh said the local fashion industry was now the second fastest growing exporter in the country's manufacturing sector, with annual exports of about A\$290 million (US\$220.4 million), up from almost nothing a few years ago.

"Our fashion has got off the beaches and onto the streets of London and Milan," Ms. Brettargh said.

Shark bile set to become saviour of pimple faced

By Jack Taylor
Agence France-Presse

SYDNEY — A compound developed from shark bile and hailed as a wonder cure for pimples is set to attack the \$1.5 billion a year world market in teenage acne remedies, researchers have said.

Scientists believe the compound, called isotretinoin, and developed by Japanese and Australian researchers from a Japanese folk remedy, may also hold the key to curing such disorders as liver damage caused by alcohol.

It is already on the market in several countries in its natural form, a lotion called "katsugo" based on foul-smelling shark bile.

Three cosmetics giants — one in the United States and two in France — are evaluating the drug under agreements with the international patent holder, Melbourne-based McFarlane Laboratories, and Sare Et to launch it in a

variety of forms.

The drug was discovered by Japanese Professor Takuo Kosuge, a world authority on natural compounds, after he set out more than 20 years ago to establish why shark oil was a successful folk cure for skin complaints.

Seven years ago he offered the world patents to his friend Jim Broadbent, managing director of McFarlane Laboratories.

The company asked the Australian government funded Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to develop the synthetic compound, which was announced recently in the CSIRO's bulletin in an article headed: "CSIRO synthesis helps industry develop skin treatment from sharks."

The CSIRO also discovered a co-product of the process used in synthesising isotretinoin may reverse liver damage caused by alcohol or drugs.

Mr. Broadbent has said that arrangements were under way to develop the compound in commercial quantities for international launching this year, but declined to name the companies because of confidentiality agreements.

"They have evaluated the compound, they are happy with its efficacy and they are proceeding on that basis," he told AFP.

"It is the only compound which has ever been discovered that will normalise excessively oily skin when it is applied topically."

"If you want to control the oiliness of skin in the facial area — which is one of the major causes of teenage acne — you apply this compound and over a period of weeks, the oiliness will return to the normal range."

Mr. Broadbent said his company had worked initially with a Japanese research group which had isolated and identified the compound.

"Then they invited us to take out the worldwide patents which we did gratefully," he said.

But his company discovered that, apart from the high cost of extracting the natural compound from shark bile, supplies would be limited as a by-product of the shark fishing industry and cosmetic companies were increasingly sensitive about the use of animal products.

"So we turned to the CSIRO and enlisted their help in developing a synthesis and they have done a superb job on it, perfecting a very complex synthesis and we have to scale that up."

"It has the potential to be used in oily hair shampoos, foaming facial washes, lotions for the face and anything to do with oily skin and I think these cosmetics houses will be creating their own formulations."

Rural stress keeps Australia's flying doctors busy

By Belinda Goldsmith

PERTH, Australia (R) — Stress is increasingly afflicting residents in remote communities across Australia, according to the only medical service able to reach them in an emergency, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

For the past 67 years the RFDS has provided vital medical services to people isolated in harsh conditions of the outback or in smaller, rural communities outside major cities.

Until recently, aboriginal, women and children's health issues, farm and car accidents were the focus of the RFDS, whose main role is to take people to hospital, stabilise them en route and hold regular clinics in remote spots.

But RFDS spokeswoman Bobbie McSloy said this is changing, with more need for psychiatric help and counselling for stress, emotional problems and depression in men, women and teenagers.

Mental illness in the hush has been exacerbated by the recent severe drought across Australia, which has crippled many farming communities, and by new communication technology, she said.

"In the past people living in the bush were connected through a radio service with open lines, called Galah sessions, for an hour twice a

day," McSloy told Reuters at RFDS's Jandakot base on the outskirts of the western city of Perth. (The galah is a noisy white Australia parrot).

"But telephones have largely replaced the radio and people now only have contact if there is a reason to call. In a way technology has made these communities more isolated."

The isolation of living in the outback where people on remote stations may see no one else for weeks, and the extra stress caused by the searing temperatures in the arid, red landscape, takes its toll on communities.

Communications officer Viv McAlpine said Australia had one of the world's highest suicide rates among teenaged males, a problem acute in rural areas with ready access to guns.

"In Darwin, October is known as suicide month as it's the start of the wet season and heat and people just can't face the oppressive weather," McAlpine said.

"After that time the isolation is even worse as almost everything you do for the next few months is inside — in air conditioning if you've got it — and this is very stressful."

McSloy said the RFDS is embarking on a national mental healthcare strategy, called "the best for the bush", to boost the out-

back's counselling and psychiatric services.

When the RFDS was set up in 1928 by the Reverend John Flynn, it was more a general health service, dealing with heart attacks, farm and mining accidents and snake bites.

It was the world's first comprehensive aerial medical service. It remains free of charge.

With just one De Havilland D50 aircraft, the Australian inland mission, as the RFDS was then called, grew rapidly, coming under national control in 1936 and changing its name in 1942.

Today the RFDS is a non-profitable charitable organisation, drawing 75 per cent of its funding from state governments and Canberra. The RFDS raises the other 25 per cent.

In 1994 the RFDS spent Australian dollars 35.22 million (\$26.06 million).

The RFDS, made popular worldwide by Australia's television soap "Flying Doctors", has 35 aircraft, 14 bases, 318 staff, and covers 80 per cent or 6.9 million square km (4.3 million square miles) of Australia.

In 1994 the RFDS flew 6.69 million km — equivalent to a trip around the world every two days — to attend 143,328 patients. It evacuated 13,885 people with a pilot and nurse on every flight and a doctor back at base for advice.

Typical cases in recent weeks included an 85-year-old farmer who was run down by a tractor after brakes failed. He lay injured for three hours before being found and flown to hospital.

A case that did not end happily was a man aged his 20s who was serious injured in a car crash on side the mining town Kalgoorlie. He died at scene despite attempts resuscitate him.

McAlpine said people the hush and anyone who had used the RFDS, such holidaymakers on outback tours, were good donors.

The television series screening overseas has aided fund-raising effort with donations regular coming from Britain, Germany, Holland and recently Japan, she said.

"It's the romance of it great Australian outback and idea of heroes with wings that draws people us," McAlpine said.

"People still envisage 'd stockman lying, dying', in Rolf Harris's song 'T Me Kangaroo Down Sport' although it is different from that now, with hospital transfers our main work."

"Also, unlike the soap, we don't all fall in love with each other although we're all totally dedicated to the service."

Chickenpox added to U.S. child vaccination list

By Mike Cooper

ATLANTA (R) — A newly-licensed vaccine against chickenpox has been added to the list of recommended immunisations for children, U.S. Health officials said Thursday.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published guidelines from an advisory committee which say children 12 to 18 months of age should be vaccinated against the varicella zoster virus, more commonly known as chickenpox.

The vaccine is also recommended for children age 11 or 12 who have never had the disease or been vaccinated.

The advisory committee on immunisation practices also says a series of three hepatitis B vaccine shots should be given to 11- and 12-year-olds who were not vaccinated when they were younger.

The chickenpox vaccine licensed in March 1995 was developed in Japan in the 1970s.

"It was first licensed for high-risk children in several European countries in 1984, in Japan in 1986 and in Korea in 1988," said Dr. Jacqueline Gindler, medical epidemiologist in the epidemiology and surveillance division of the CDC's child vaccine preventable disease branch.

"Its use was extended to healthy children in Japan

and Korea in 1989, where more than two million doses have been administered and no serious safety problems have been identified," she said.

The CDC estimates that about 4 million cases of chickenpox occur every year, mostly among children between 5 and 9 years of age.

Gindler anticipates the number of chickenpox cases will fall as use of the vaccine becomes more widespread. After a measles vaccine was licensed in the United States in 1963, the number of U.S. reported cases fell dramatically from more than 400,000 every year to 312 in 1993.

Chickenpox is more contagious than mumps and

rubella, but less contagious than measles. It is easily transmitted between household members or classmates at schools or day-care centres through open sores, respiratory droplets or airborne particles.

After infection with chickenpox, people generally have a lifelong immunity, but the virus can reactivate later in life as shingles, particularly in people with immune systems weakened by age, disease or drugs.

The CDC said children should be vaccinated against a number of diseases including hepatitis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hib disease, polio, measles, mumps and rubella.

Genetic variation linked to personality trait

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Two independent teams of researchers for the first time have linked a genetic variation to a normal personality type as opposed to mental illness, the journal Nature Genetics has said.

The parallel studies, one in Israel the other in the United States, found that a long DNA sequence on part of chromosome 11 is more likely to be present in individuals with a personality trait called "novelty seeking" — impulsive, excitable, fickle, thrill-seeking and quick-tempered.

While a genetic relation to mental illness has been observed more readily, scientists said it was the first time a genetic variation had been linked to a normal aspect of personality.

Researchers set out to test a hypothesis by Washington University brain researcher Robert Cloninger that novelty-seeking behaviour was affected by gene D4dr, which controls the way a neural messenger chemical called dopamine is transmitted in the brain.

Researchers at Herzog Memorial Hospital in Jerusalem tested 124 Israelis, while a separate study at the laboratory of clinical science at the National Institute of Mental Health here tested 315 Americans.

Both tests revealed that individuals with long DNA sequences scored higher on novelty-seeking variables, while those with shorter sequences scored generally lower.

Researchers said their results did not vary with sex, age or ethnicity. Cloninger, in an accompanying commentary in the journal, warned that the results were not conclusive, but noted that "success in mapping genes for a normal personality trait may signal a fruitful way to map genes for psychopathology as well."

U.S. goes for 'realistic' goals in diet guidelines

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. government issued new dietary guidelines emphasizing "moderation over marathons," but drew criticism from a prominent nutritionist who said the advice was too soft.

The new guidelines issued, backing away from earlier harsh admonitions about sugar and fat, promote what its backers said were realistic health and dietary goals.

"These guidelines are the gold standard for nutrition and health," health and human services Secretary Donna Shalala said.

"They will help Americans ring in the New Year with new diet resolutions that will protect their health — and maybe save their lives."

While a genetic relation to mental illness has been observed more readily, scientists said it was the first time a genetic variation had been linked to a normal aspect of personality.

Ms. Shalala said the advice for "moderation over marathons" was more realistic. It calls for consumption of a wide range of foods, "good judgment" in the use of sugar, salt and alcohol, and a diet balanced with physical activity.

"Balance, variety and moderation are the watchwords of laissez-faire, or do-nothing behaviour," said Michael Jacobson, executive director of the Centre for Science in the Public Interest, a private watchdog group in Washington.

"Ideally, federal guide-

lines should tell people what's the best possible diet and urge them to move in that direction. These don't."

The centre has gained notoriety for its criticism of movie-theatre popcorn, Mexican-style fast food and McDonald's hamburgers.

"Each year, 400,000 Americans die from diet-related illnesses like heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and stroke," said Mr. Jacobson.

"The American culture promotes fast food, French fries and processed food. And the sugar guideline is extraordinarily bland. Most Americans already consume far too much refined sugar, in the form of soda pop."

Among the changes in the guidelines — the fourth issued by the government and the first since 1990 — was a single recommended healthy-adult weight range, instead of one that allows for adults gaining weight with age.

Suggested ranges for healthy weight and moderate overweight based on height are:

- 1.52 m. - 43-58 kgs, 56-66 kgs
- 1.60 m. - 50-63 kgs, 63-73 kgs
- 1.68 m. - 54-70 kgs, 70-81 kgs
- 1.75 m. - 59-77 kgs, 77-88 kgs
- 1.82 m. - 63-83 kgs, 83-95 kgs

(The ranges are regardless of sex and anything above the higher category of weight is considered severe overweight.)

The guidelines recommend that most of the daily intake of food come from

grain products (bread, cereal, rice and pasta), vegetables and fruit, with moderate amounts from milk, meat and beans. Daily caloric intake should range from 1,600 for inactive women to 2,800 for active men.

"At the same time, if guidelines caution against crash weight-loss diets, suggesting slow and steady weight loss... through physical activity and healthy food choices," a U.S. Department of Agriculture statement said.

The guidelines also for the first time acknowledge vegetarian diet is an acceptable alternative, but encourage vegetarians to take vitamin B-12 supplements, as to maintain consumption of vitamin C and calcium.

Agriculture Secretary Dr. Glickman said the new guidelines were intended reflect the reality of the U.S. diet.

"This is not an effort to tell people what to eat, or a nutritional nanny," I added.

For the first time the nutrition guidelines also promote exercise, urging 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity, which Ms. Shalala said could include gardening, vigorous housework, brisk walking or taking stairs instead of the elevator.

The Vegetarian Awareness Network lauded the guidelines as an endorsement of a no-meat diet, and the U.S. Wine Institute said it role in contributing to low incidence of heart disease and longer life expectancy.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

BEASTLY BEHAVIOR
By Marian Baran

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Diagramless, 17 x 17

By Frances Burton

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SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

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Bosnia ceasefire threatens food lifeline for thousands

By Caroline Smith
Reuters

TUZLA, Bosnia — Izet Imamovic has one hot meal a day and twice a week he gets to eat fish, meat or cheese. It's not very good, he says, but at least it's something.

At a public kitchen in Tuzla town centre he eats food provided by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) at a table surrounded by chain-smoking, chatting old men.

They come everyday to the restaurant which provides not only food but a vital social network for Tuzla's pensioners and for refugees.

Bosnia's ceasefire has undoubtedly improved life for its citizens but it has also meant an alarming drop in the amount of food aid pledged by donor nations, aid workers say.

The WFP has provided a lifeline to Tuzla for three years and will continue to feed them, although it now plans to start cutting its rations to encourage self-sufficiency.

"Our policy is to under-supply to avoid dependency," said Desmond Maurer of the WFP in Tuzla.

"If we take it on ourselves to feed the whole country it will collapse and it will never recover. We have to make things sufficiently uncomfortable for people to make them mobilise their resources," he told Reuters.

More than 2.6 million people in former Yugoslavia are currently fed by the WFP, 1.9 million of them in

Bosnia.

The policy of cutting rations was to have been introduced gradually so as to minimise the impact, Mr. Maurer said.

"It'll be hard for people and they won't like it. But they can manage — unfortunately January and February are the worst months for it to happen," he said.

The ceasefire led to a drop in donations but a dangerous hole in the supplies used to feed two-thirds of residents in the Tuzla region was filled at the last minute by an extra \$50 million of aid pledged by the United States.

"However, Mr. Maurer said supplies could still fall perilously low before winter is out."

In a distribution centre tucked away in a central Tuzla municipal building stands a huge pile of sacks containing dried peas with "U.S. aid" stamped all over them.

A few women hang around chatting and a small, toothless elderly woman looks at us and beams widely.

Round the back of the sacks is a scene more reminiscent of a 19th century general store somewhere in the American midwest than the last stage in a well-developed food aid chain.

Wooden counters ring the room and inside a railing in the centre stands a bulky old wood-burning stove with a chimney rising through the roof.

Old metal scales with weights lined up beside

them stand along the counters. In the corner are two men with a ghost-like appearance. They dole out the flour from a huge bin in the corner, their clothes, skin and hair covered with it.

The women stop at different points around the room and pick up rations of sugar, oil, tinned fish or meat, dried peas, flour, salt, soap and shampoo.

It is hardly an exciting diet but Mr. Maurer says they receive all the nutrients for a balanced diet and stay alive.

The WFP feeds 400,000 people in the Tuzla region out of a total population of 600,000.

The public restaurant, in a former disco, is open for two hours a day and feeds more than 200 people daily. In the kitchen they cook hundreds of meals which are distributed to people in the area.

Mr. Imamovic came from Srebrenica four years ago. "We had to leave, the Chetniks (Serb nationalists) came and threw us out. We had a big house there, now we only have two rooms and a toilet," he said.

Beside him sat Vehid Begic, 81, who was a judge in Tuzla's high court before the war.

He lives alone and has no children. For him the Bosnian war was worse than World War II, in which he fought.

"History doesn't remember this kind of butchery and killing," he said. "I don't expect very much from the peace. The most

difficult thing will be returning refugees to their homes," he said.

Another place where food is delivered in Tuzla is the home for displaced people from Srebrenica, the eastern Bosnian Muslim enclave which fell to the Serbs in the summer of 1995.

Most of the people here are women and children, some of them orphans. Many lost their husbands when the United Nations "safe area" fell.

Of the beneficiaries of WFP aid nearly three-quarters are displaced people. Some were resettled from around Drina River in eastern Bosnia after Serb forces moved into the area. Around 34,000 of them fled the fall of Srebrenica.

These people receive full rations while others receive partial rations to supplement their food.

The WFP has begun using local haulage firms to transport food aid to cut transport costs. It has also rehabilitated a mill to help people begin to feed themselves.

In the past few months around 200 30-tonne trucks of grain have been milled here. The flour in the distribution centre was milled locally. It is the start of a long process of revival for the local food industry.

But the aid has not always been so dull — Saudi Arabia once sent a consignment of dates to Bosnia and the European Community sent, as one of their basic commodities, a consignment of chocolate-hazelnut spread.



Nabil Sawalha, Hisham Yanis and Amal Dabbas in "Peace O' Peace". The trio were on Tuesday honoured by His Majesty

King Hussein with Al Istiqlal Medal of the First Order for their artistic achievement (File photo)

Play warmly received in Israel

By Schechrezade Faramarzi

The Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Jordanian comedians Nabil Sawalha and Hisham Yanis got a standing ovation when they performed their one-act play in Israel. For the first time ever, Israelis were laughing at former enemies poking fun at them.

The play, "Peace O' Peace," which satirises the Arab-Israeli peace process, was "nothing short of a cathartic experience" for the Israeli audience, theater critic Naomi Doudai said.

Israelis are portrayed as clever but also as opportunistic and sometimes brutal. In one scene, ancient Israelites in Jericho with long beards and caveman garb drive out the local population, shouting, "Kill all the Arabs." In another, Israeli negotiators at peace talks in Washington want to talk about birds and the environment while the

Arab side wants to discuss land.

The play caricatures the Middle East's historic personalities — from the biblical figure Joshua, to PLO leader Yasser Arafat. It doesn't shy away from such touchy issues as human rights violations in Arab countries.

In one scene, Mr. Arafat, played by Mr. Yanis, and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, played by Mr. Sawalha, argue about the borders of a future Palestinian-ruled state. Looking confused, Mr. Arafat gives in as Mr. Peres circles vague lines on the palm of his hand.

"I have to call Clinton first," is all Mr. Arafat can say.

The scene, as well as all those that show Israelis taking advantage of the Palestinians' weak position in peace negotiations, drew bursts of laughter from the packed Israeli theater.

But when Mr. Sawalha and Mr. Yanis took the play

to the Palestinian West Bank town of Ramallah, stones were thrown at the theater.

The Palestinian press criticised Mr. Yanis and Mr. Sawalha for lighting candles at the grave of slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and for performing the play in Israel before bringing it to the West Bank.

To Israelis, the play symbolises new, peaceful relations between the two countries and the beginnings of a cultural exchange.

The performers "bring here a taste of reality to the new era promised by the peace process," Mr. Doudai, the critic, wrote in the English-language Jerusalem Post.

But the play revealed Palestinians' apprehension about other Arab states normalising relations with Israel while they are still negotiating the terms of self-rule.

"The situation with Israel is still not normal, we ha-

ven't got our rights yet, we don't have an independent state yet. Culturally, all these things are linked. We cannot talk about normalisation when there are thousands of prisoners still in Israeli jails," said Ahmad Abu Saloum, a member of the Palestinian Actors' Association.

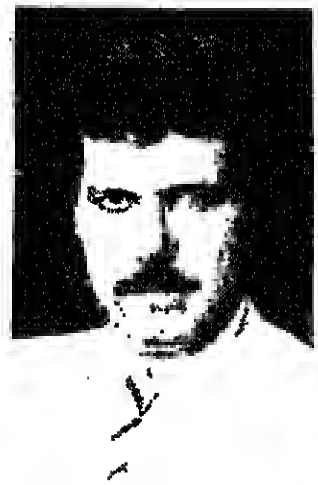
Mr. Sawalha said he was apprehensive about performing the play in Israel — the pair put on four shows in Tel Aviv earlier this month — but the audience turned out to be "terrific."

"It's very funny — the way they see us, as if from inside a mirror, beyond hostilities," said Raz Dekel, a 20-year-old Israeli medical student.

Mr. Yanis said he was dismayed, however, by the Palestinians' negative response.

"We had good intentions but were shocked to see the reaction," he said. "That's not the way an Arab would welcome a brother."

King accorded warm welcome in Israel



Fayez Tarawneh

"I will tell him I am very proud that we are from Jordan and that you are our King," Capt. Atout told Israel television just before King Hussein arrived.

When the King entered, he kissed pilot Atout on both cheeks in the traditional Arab greeting.

Head nurse Anna Belinkot-Gabi said the hospital staff had been very excited to receive its first Jordanian patients, "but after a few days it all seemed so natural. I think the change in our world view of peace was as quick as theirs."

The two Jordanians have toured Jerusalem and Capt. Atout was allowed to fly an Israeli air force Cessna over the holy city.

"I never imagined this view.... I was very happy," he said.

Following are excerpts from the King remarks made on arrival in Tel Aviv and later at Ichilov hospital.

On arrival: ON BEHALF of all my colleagues who have accompanied me today on this visit to Israel, I would like to say how happy we are to have the opportunity to be with our friends and our partners in building and laying the foundations for a comprehensive peace in this region.

It is indeed a pleasure for me to bring with me the feelings of my people, our commitment to the cause of peace and the chances for our peoples to build together the future that is worthy of us.

We have come a long way in a short space of time, prime minister. I always had the greatest respect and admiration for you and I have always known your commitment to peace.

At Ichilov hospital: I am so moved and so touched by the warmth with which we have been received here today ... myself, the prime minister of Jordan and all the members of the Jordanian family who have come with me on this visit to Tel Aviv.

This is the first official visit to this city which I saw from the air flying back from the United States of America after the ratification of the Washington Declaration and the beginning of our combined efforts to establish peace between our countries. God willing, peace between human beings, between the descendants of the children of Abraham, peace between cousins, peace between people who deserve to enjoy it and cherish it.

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank the people of Tel Aviv for the wonderful reception as I felt at home and amongst friends. It is indeed a pleasure for me to be here today. It is moving in many ways: the occasion, the experience, the visit to see Leah and the Rabin family.

I have visited in this wonderful facility two Jordanians: a Cobra pilot that

crashed, who lives here among family, and friends and who is receiving the best treatment he can get anywhere in the world. And another Jordanian who was the victim of peace keeping within the Jordanian unit serving with the United Nations in Bosnia and who received excellent surgery and is recovering as well.

It is so easy for some people to hate and live in anger and not to see beyond that. But it is unique for them to see beyond destruction to construction, beyond war to peace, beyond death to life. I knew Yitzhak Rabin as a friend as he did me and beyond where we were, there was always this mutual respect and there was, I felt, with him as was the case with me ... something rather unique.

It is our duty to bring peace and end wars that separated us and to come together and live together and to build together.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the warm welcome we have received and to the people of Israel and to other peoples of this region I say God bless you.

G 77 meetings conclude

Continued from Page 12

One the effectiveness of economic cooperation among developing countries, the document stressed the importance of investment, production and technology techniques, the development of human resources as well as access to markets.

During the conference UNCTAD's role as an inter-governmental body, was extensively discussed.

Ministers agreed that UNCTAD should provide a forum for a better understanding among developing countries and for the charting of policies and measures needed to protect their interests.

However, Takayuki Kimura, Japanese ambassador to Amman, and an observer in the meeting, noted that UNCTAD which has 156 developing nations in its membership, had not been able to meet all their needs. This was a result of UNCTAD's attempt to cover myriad of issues with

limited financial resources, he said.

Addressing the ministers, Mr. Kimura said UNCTAD should redefine its role and objectives and secure effectiveness by focusing its activities on fewer priority issues.

In the closing ceremony, Ali Abul Ragheb, minister of industry and trade said that the Amman Declaration reflected issues of interest to the Asian group, determined the opportunities for growth and development, and singled out the challenges and risks that encounter the developing nations.

Jordan, which hosted the meeting, will chair the Asian group during the four coming years until the next ministerial meeting.

The UNCTAD 9th general conference in South Africa in April will bring Asia together with Africa and Latin America, the other two groups that will hold similar meetings to assess their own problems and needs.

Tough times ahead for Hong Kong

By John Leicester
The Associated Press

HONG KONG — 1995 proved a rocky year for Hong Kong, and this year doesn't look any rosier.

China's preparations for recovering the British colony in 1997 are kicking into high gear. Some people already are predicting a year of strife and perhaps an exodus of residents as Beijing's intentions for the colony come into focus.

"If people start to doubt whether Hong Kong really will have the promised high degree of independence after 1997, then maybe they will decide to go abroad," Gov. Chris Patten recently told the British Broadcasting Corp.

Many observers detected a hardening during 1995 in Beijing's approach towards the colony. That included the declaration on the day of Hong Kong's September legislative elections that China would not recognise the results because of democratic reforms introduced by Mr. Patten.

Michael Degolyer, an American analyst who tracks Hong Kong public opinion, fears Beijing's attitude will toughen further in the approach to 1997 as senior Chinese leaders take an increasingly close, personal interest in the hand-over.

"We are going to see a lot more laying down of the law than reassuring words," he said in an interview. "Hong Kong people are quickly going to have to learn a whole new ball game."

Much this year will depend on the preparatory committee — a blandly named but powerful body of 150 Hong Kong and Chinese businessmen, officials, academics and other prominent figures that Beijing selected last month to help set up a new government and legislature for the colony.

One of the committee's main tasks will be choosing 400 people who will recommend to Beijing who should take Mr. Patten's place when China takes over on



Will Hong Kong see an exodus as Beijing prepares to take over?

July 1, 1997. Mr. Patten's government has pledged to cooperate with the committee.

But even before its first meeting, the committee is under fire. Critics contend its membership is too pro-business and too pro-Beijing to adequately represent Hong Kong's 6 million people, especially since the colony's largest political party — the democrats — was excluded because of its vocal championing of democracy and human rights.

"1996 will be the year of arguing," said Frederick Fung, chairman of a smaller pro-democracy party and one of 14 Hong Kong legislators appointed to the committee.

On a positive note, Chinese-British relations, frozen after Mr. Patten unveiled his reforms in 1992, warmed a little when Chinese Foreign Minister

Qian Qichen visited London in October. Mr. Malcolm Rifkind, the British foreign secretary, is hoping to further the thaw when he travels Tuesday to Beijing for talks on Hong Kong.

But much remains to be done. China upset many people in Hong Kong by backing a proposal that the colony's bill of rights be trimmed and by attacking its welfare spending, an area that Beijing earlier promised to leave to local officials after the transfer of sovereignty.

China's sentencing of dissident Wei Jingsheng in December also renewed fears about freedom after 1997.

Today Wei Jingsheng, tomorrow you or me," was a slogan shouted in a pre-New Year's rally to protest Mr. Wei's 14-year sentence. Hong Kong's hope now is that the preparatory committee will hold China to its promise of giving the colony a "high degree of

autonomy" and persuade it against jampering with the bill of rights, a cornerstone of the territory's human rights safeguards.

Martin Lee, the democrats' leader, said he hopes the committee will repair Hong Kong's damage confidence and convince parents "there is a future for their kids."

"If they do it well, then I hope these parents can be persuaded," Mr. Lee told Hong Kong radio. "But if things continue to be wrong, as in last year... then I'm afraid many of them will go."

Thousands have already left. Applications to emigrate to Canada jumped by more than 60 per cent last year, while a recent poll of 15 to 24-year-olds found about 40 per cent wanted to emigrate because of fears over freedom corruption and unemployment after 1997.

(Continued from page 1)

of peace." Peace prizes went to Elitakim Rubinstein of Israel and Fayez Tarawneh of Jordan who negotiated the October 1994 peace treaty. The ceremony was originally planned for November but postponed in the wake of Mr. Rabin's death.

The Hebrew daily Yediot Aharonot ran a banner headline in Arabic reading: "Welcome Your Majesty King Hussein."

Both Israeli and Jordanian officials played down political expectations from the one-day visit.

"The fact that this is His Majesty's first visit to Tel Aviv does not mean there are new political developments that warranted the visit," Jordan's ambassador in Tel Aviv, Marwan Muasher, told Reuters. He said the visit had been planned before Mr. Rabin was assassinated.

The King's first stop in Israel was at the bedside of Captain Muhanad Atout, a helicopter pilot who shattered his spine in a training accident.

"His Majesty really cares for his soldiers and the people who work for him," Capt. Atout said.

Capt. Atout, wearing a plaid shirt over his green paisley hospital pajamas, said he was injured when his Cobra attack helicopter crashed in training last August. After treatment at the King Hussein Medical Centre in Amman, he was recently transferred to Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv.

"They did in Jordan what they can do. They said to me the best thing would be for me to finish my treatment here in Israel."

Hospital Director Gabi Barabash said it was hard to imagine a year ago that Jordanian soldiers would be treated at Israeli hospitals.

"They say medicine has no borders," Dr. Barabash said. "I am proud we were granted this unique opportunity to help to bridge borders."

"I am very happy for this because we are enemies, but now we are friends," Capt. Atout agreed.

Fellow serviceman, Sgt. Nabil Omari, was more nervous before the visit, pacing back and forth and peeking down the hall.

Wearing a baseball cap turned backwards, the trooper said he was undergoing neurosurgery for shrapnel wounds in his left shoulder. Sgt. Omari was wounded when his tank was hit by a rocket while serving.

Israel trade deficit hits record \$10.2 b

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's trade deficit widened sharply in 1995 to a record \$10.156 billion from \$7.318 billion in 1994, the Central Bureau of Statistics said Wednesday.

The government statistics agency attributed the sharp rise in the deficit mainly to a worsening in the country's terms of trade — import prices rose by 11 per cent while prices for exports increased only five per cent.

Israeli exporters blame the central bank's tight monetary policy for the ballooning deficit. High domestic interest rates in 1995 buoyed up the shekel at a time when the dollar was weak worldwide.

The United States is Israel's biggest export market while Europe is the source of the largest share of its im-

ports.

The trade gap, which has contributed to a worsening of the current account deficit in Israel's balance of payments, is seen as one of the country's most serious economic problems.

Imports in 1995 grew to \$28.035 billion from \$23.369 billion a year earlier while exports were \$17.879 billion, up from \$16.051 billion.

Segev sees Egypt gas deal soon

In another economic field, Israeli Energy Minister Gonen Segev said Tuesday he hoped to finalise an agreement with Egypt within three months to supply his country with natural gas.

Mr. Segev was speaking after meeting Egypt's Prime Minister Kamal, Ganzouri

and Oil Minister Hamdi Al Banbi in Cairo.

"It's not too early (to sign an agreement). The prime minister and Dr. Hamdi Al Banbi and I have decided that we won't wait till the end of 1996 but we will really force our group to finish this project in two or maximum three months," Mr. Segev told reporters.

The project, which involves building a pipeline to carry about two billion cubic metres of natural gas from Egypt's Nile Delta to the Palestinian self-rule areas and Israel, is one of the largest joint ventures between the two countries since they signed a peace treaty in 1979. Start up is predicted in 1999.

Israel is buying the gas for industrial use and to generate

electricity. Mr. Segev had previously said he hoped the supply agreement would be signed by the end of 1996.

The Israeli minister already signed a memorandum of understanding with Enron Corporation for the supply of at least two million tonnes a year of liquefied natural gas from Qatar.

Enron expects to finalise a contract with Israel on Qatari supplies within six months but Mr. Segev has said the Qatari supplies will not satisfy all of Israel's future needs.

"The Egyptian prime minister says he is very interested in cooperation in agriculture and tourism and he thinks that the main part of the peace process is and will be economic cooperation," Mr. Segev said of his meeting with Mr. Ganzouri.

Bankers see no recession in Europe

BASEL, Switzerland (AFP) — Europe is not going into recession and its economy will enjoy new vigour, the Group of Ten central bank governors agreed at their regular monthly meeting in Basel. Speaking for the governors, German Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer said that: "It is our shared opinion that the slowdown recorded in the second half of last year does not point to recession, and the economy will get going again."

He added that the governors felt that "Monetary policy has done its work, and things are going in the right direction at that level."

S. Arabia urges West to scrap energy products tax

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuter

AMMAN — Saudi Arabia urged the industrial West Tuesday to abolish discriminatory taxes on imports of energy products, saying they were an obstacle to fair world trade.

"Our products of an important export value and comparative advantage, such as oil and petrochemicals, face protectionist barriers in advanced countries markets under the cover of environmental pretexts," Saudi Commerce Minister Osama Bin Jaafar Bin Ibrahim Faqih told delegates attending the eighth Asian ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 in Amman.

The European Union (EU) has been trying to agree a common policy that would impose a tax of \$10 per barrel on energy supplies over 10 years, ostensibly to limit the danger to the environment by burning hydrocarbons.

The EU imports a fifth of its crude oil from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), while the GCC is the sixth biggest buyer of EU products. The GCC comprises Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman.

Mr. Faqih said the industrial states, without naming them, imposed high taxes on imports from Saudi Arabia "that exceeded" the basic price of oil "by a number of times," and cited the discriminatory carbon tax compared to other energy sources.

Mr. Faqih said barriers were being placed at the same time his country, the world's biggest oil producer, was striving to diversify and expand its economy by better utilising its natural resources.

"This matter goes against the goals and objectives of

the world trade system," said Mr. Faqih.

"As a result all (EU) member states are urged to confirm their commitment to these objectives and stop imposing such taxes and other discriminatory and unjust practices to preserve the credibility of the international trade regime," said Mr. Faqih.

The GCC estimates its members would suffer the most of all oil producers when the EU imposes the carbon tax, with total estimated losses of the Gulf states exceeding \$17.7 billion by 2000.

Mr. Faqih also told delegates it was essential to enhance the effectiveness of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), which UNCTAD had played a central role in promoting.

Saudi Arabia and other GCC states fear new multilateral trade rules may erode favourable market access for oil exports.

"It is of importance to continue the GSP as a central element of the international trade regime and a main method to bridge the development gap between the developing and advanced nations," Mr. Faqih said of the system that has seen an erosion of its importance with the free trade areas and customs union.

Mr. Faqih said the World Trade Organisation (WTO) had to show greater flexibility "in affording the opportunity for developing countries to join with just and non-discriminatory terms."

The WTO, which Saudi Arabia has applied to join, should take into consideration the developing nations' needs to allow "their fair integration in the international trade regime without eroding their benefits under GSP," Mr. Faqih said.

Workshop sheds light on ISO 9000 techniques

By Khatib Salman
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An ISO 9000 workshop, concluded in Amman Tuesday, highlighted to Jordanian companies the importance of acquiring International standardisation requirements, procedure writing methods, and tips on how to pass the assessment inspection from the first time.

The two-day workshop was organised by Dajani Consultations and Design of Jordan in cooperation with the London-based Global Certification Ltd., with the participation of five industrial, information systems, foodstuff, and shipping companies.

According to Abdul Razzaq Dajani, the director general of Dajani Consultations and Design, the aim of holding such workshops was to explain details about the ISO 9000 and how to be awarded the seal of approval.

"In addition to that," he said, "the objective was to provide local companies with a competitive advantage in world markets."

The Standards and Specifications Corporation Director-General Hassan Saudi indicated the importance of private sector efforts in reaching international standards that would enable Jordanian businesses to com-

pete internationally.

"Jordan is currently working on upgrading its industries and production to reach international standards through training cadres on all production, supervision and administration levels," he said.

Peter Gibb of Global Certification Ltd. briefed participants about procedure writing methods and the documentation process of purchasing materials, manufacturing, production lines, administrative procedures and marketing means.

Participants were also briefed about critical elements that companies need to identify prior to the assessment visit in order for them to be awarded the certificate from the first inspection.

Four Jordanian companies have been awarded the ISO 9000 certificates since 1994. Over seventy thousand companies worldwide have been awarded the certificate which is awarded by the Geneva-based International Standardisation Organisation.

The quality management assurance certificate deals with quality details through a documentation process that covers areas ranging from purchasing and manufacturing to installation, maintenance, services and management.

Asian states see gains, risks in liberalisation

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuter

AMMAN — Delegates to a U.N. conference of Asia's developing states warned Tuesday that major economic reforms were essential to ward off marginalisation in a global economy.

"Paradoxically globalisation is proving to be a powerful force for both integration and marginalisation," Rubens Ricupero, secretary general of UNCTAD, told delegates attending the eighth Asian ministerial meeting of the Group of 77.

The meeting included Asian countries ranging from "tigers" like Singapore and Malaysia to less developed countries (LDCs) like Mongolia.

Delegates discussed trade liberalisation and globalisation, ways to promote private enterprise and competitiveness and improve terms in international trade.

Regional meetings in Amman, Addis Ababa, and Caracas are preparing a common platform for developing states at the four-year meeting of UNCTAD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in South Africa next April.

Delegates said while there were benefits for developing countries that adjusted to new world trade and competition rules, poor states also faced serious risks of marginalisation, instability and disruptions.

"The developing world... has to be able to go through structural reform necessary to be able to adapt itself to the new conditions. It is not easy, it is costly and in many cases may result in instability nevertheless there is no option," Sirous Nasseri, Iran's ambassador to Geneva and chairman of the Asian group, told Reuters.

Many countries with non-diversified economies dependent on exports of a few commodities were at a disadvantage in the new multilateral system of trade, he said.

Officials, including representatives of the U.N. and international financial organisations, said a large number of countries faced a very real danger of marginalisation.

Liberalisation would force developing countries to speed

market-oriented reforms that include deregulation, price liberalisation, privatisation and foreign direct investment, delegates said.

South African minister of trade and industry Trevor Manuel told delegates that advanced states had to help the least developed countries, many in sub-Saharan Africa, to attain real development.

"There can be no market access if there are no goods or services to be bought or sold, or if a series of non-tariff barriers are erected by the developed market economies," he said.

Mr. Manuel warned that "many countries in our part of the world, and elsewhere too, cannot continue to export what we dig from the earth and pluck from her trees, while buying everything else from the developed countries."

But he said while sustainable economic growth "could not be achieved by remaining dependent, it could not be achieved by reverting to the failed policies of the past."

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson

ACROSS

- City planner's chart
- Nooses
- Slanted opinion
- Judge's garb
- Good golf score
- Comic Johnson
- Boer republic
- Cab driver's item
- Made of clay
- Recorder's item
- Civil War initials
- "Not — Stranger
- Windy month
- Snare
- Supervision
- By way of
- Rang out
- Fanway's left field fence
- Burned slightly
- Nothing
- Possess
- Foundation
- Hooded jacket
- Sanguine
- es Salaam
- Consumes
- Hopes for
- Go — leave
- port
- Of royal birth
- It's a sin to tell
- Hoard
- Sow's mate
- Hereditary
- Views
- WWII battle site

DOWN

- School dance
- Store of knowledge
- Blind as —
- Doctrine
- Lighthouse
- Harry —
- Knucklehead
- Fairy tale villain
- Interlace
- Wise ones
- English spa
- Dies —
- Envelope abbr
- View
- Small weight
- Island, NY
- Laid flagstones
- Ashtabula's lake
- Deeds
- Term of respect in India
- Soors place
- Showy flower
- Impetuous
- Site of the union
- Irritate
- Benedict
- Lively group
- Scon
- Emend again
- Bog
- Pulchritudinous
- Island off Alaska
- Got up
- European apple
- Charity
- Emerald Isle
- I drew my snicker —
- Brogan or pump
- Location
- Israeli airline
- Flying pretin
- Glasgow for one
- On wrong
- Footnote

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

SHAW AWRY SAPS
HONEY BRIE ISAW
OPINE AIDA APIA
WILDCATTER MINT
AGEE NIECE
CHICLE ASPS
LARA DAWN SEWUP
IRATE NOT OCALA
PENAL ENES AGAR
BLOW POTENT
SLOAN STET
AWOL CATAWAMPUS
LEVI ADAM RAISE
DOES LUKE UTTER
TERM LEER TARA

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"My wife's not as playful as she used to be. She has a court order that says I can't put an ice cube down her shirt."

Peanuts

DO YOU THINK I'LL GET ARRESTED FOR DRAWING MY OWN STAMPS?

WELL, YOU MIGHT START LOOKING FOR A GOOD ATTORNEY.

BEFORE WE BEGIN, YOUR HONOR, MAY WE ASK IF YOU RECEIVED THE CHRISTMAS CARD WE SENT YOU?

Andy Capp

SHE'S MARRYING THE BINGO CALLER NEXT WEEK, RUBBIE — WHAT SHOULD WE GIVE THEM?

I'LL GIVE 'EM SIX WEEKS.

YOU'RE TOO GENEROUS, RUBBIE, I'LL GIVE 'EM THREE.

Mutt'n'Jeff

NEVER MIND CALLING THE PLUMBER! IT'S ONLY A SMALL LEAK — I'LL FIX IT!

DID YOU FIX IT?

I AM!

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TOBAL

THOOP

TULJYS

SINUGE

Print answer here: HIS

Yesterday's Jumbles: ABATE GOOSE SEXTON CANOPY

Answer: What the convict was in the middle of — A SENTENCE

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JANUARY 11, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have to be very cautious in the handling of your career activities, whether at home or in the business world which must be completed.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a good day today to get your appearance improved. Get rid of stumbling blocks in the way of your having a fun time with close friends and loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can make many fine improvements at your home today, so get busy at them early. Show that you are an active person by taking on several projects.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Handle communication and travel matters personally as they will get completed. Be careful to avoid some accident in the outside world.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You can get your property tuned up nicely today. Set up a more workable budget for the days which will be prosperous.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make a good plan to gain your personal wishes and you make real progress in achieving goals in the days ahead for you to be successful.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have many duties attend to both personal and business, so get right at them early today even though it may be a bit difficult.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Anything you want to do to gain your innermost wishes can seem to have difficulties along, but persevere and you will win out.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Study into the cause of problematical affairs in your career activities and eliminate them. Do ask for the assistance from knowledgeable individuals.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Look into new enterprises which can bring you greater success and don't try to push long-time ambitions at this time or there could be difficulties.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is a good day to make collections and get your financial obligations paid and make your business function properly.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Have a long talk with a fellow associate about agreements made and it might be wise to make some changes in them for the better.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get your work place better organized and purchase mechanisms which can improve your skill level. Be more cooperative with others.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Try to enchant others by improving your appearance and get fine results. Find some nice gift for the one you love and present it with style.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Do something which will make your home more functional and comfortable so that all who are under your roof will be happier.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Show affection when communicating with others. Contact those you want to invite out on the town this evening for some recreational activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) It is important that you show devotion for an important advisor and make sure you follow ideas given to you at this time.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are highly-magical today and you can use this quality to do your bidding. Keep appointments you have made with close friends.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Analyse just how you can become more popular and put ideas to work early. Then later today sit back and watch the good results.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Although you seldom compliment anyone it is wise to praise good friends today and you will gain more goodwill for the success you desire.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Plan how to gain the favour of bigwigs in the business world and carry through with your ideas to some logical conclusion.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Do some entertaining of worthwhile persons and show the best side of your nature and you will make close friends of them.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A fine gift for your mate could easily repair some difficulty between you and bring happiness at this time which will be beneficial.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Showing a precise partner that your relationship is important is wise at this time. Make sure that clauses are added to any new contracts.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

Israel's secretive diamond dealers display wares

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's secretive diamond manufacturers have opened their first show ever, bringing together some \$300 million in gems and jewels.

Israel, which exported \$4.5 billion in diamonds in 1995, accounts for half the world's polished gem-quality rough diamonds production. It imports 6.5 million of the 10.5 million carats of gem-quality rough diamonds mined annually, worth nearly \$3 billion.

"Diamond people don't want to expose their buyers to competition. They are very conservative, very secretive," said Henry Wolf of Schachter Namdar Polishing Works.

"In the United States, until 15 years ago, there wasn't

even advertising. To think of a fair where everyone can come and see the competition was unheard of," he said.

More than 300 exhibitors, including companies from Hungary, the United States, Cyprus and France, were represented at the fair, open only to diamond and jewelry buyers.

"Many buyers have been reluctant to come to Israel, especially from the Far East but even from the United States, because of security reasons. Getting everything into one fair ground makes it easier," said David Bar-Haim Rutlinger, deputy managing director of the Israel Diamond Institute.

The organisers said there

were buyers from Jordan, Egypt, Japan, Indonesia and Malaysia.

The displays included a sparkling 58-carat diamond, with a manufacturer's price of \$400,200 and a blue-toned diamond priced at \$250,000 a carat. At 3.52 carats it is worth \$880,000.

At another booth Yuval Harary exhibited his "forever" concept, which unites four specially polished stones to give the appearance of one big stone. A stone that looks like two carats sells for \$2,200 against \$8,000 for a real two-carat stone.

The fair, which opened Sunday and closes Wednesday, is one of many changes in Israel's diamond industry,

says the diamond institute.

"Our next big project is to facilitate more direct business between diamond producing countries and polishers," said Mr. Rutlinger.

Currently, the Central Selling Organisation of the De Beers family controls about 60 per cent of the world's rough sources.

This syndicate allocates diamonds, usually giving the largest stones to the United States, medium gems to

Israel and Belgium and smaller ones to India, Mr. Rutlinger said.

Israel gets about \$900 million worth of diamonds from the syndicate. The rest it must seek elsewhere, often buying "second-hand stones" from Belgium.

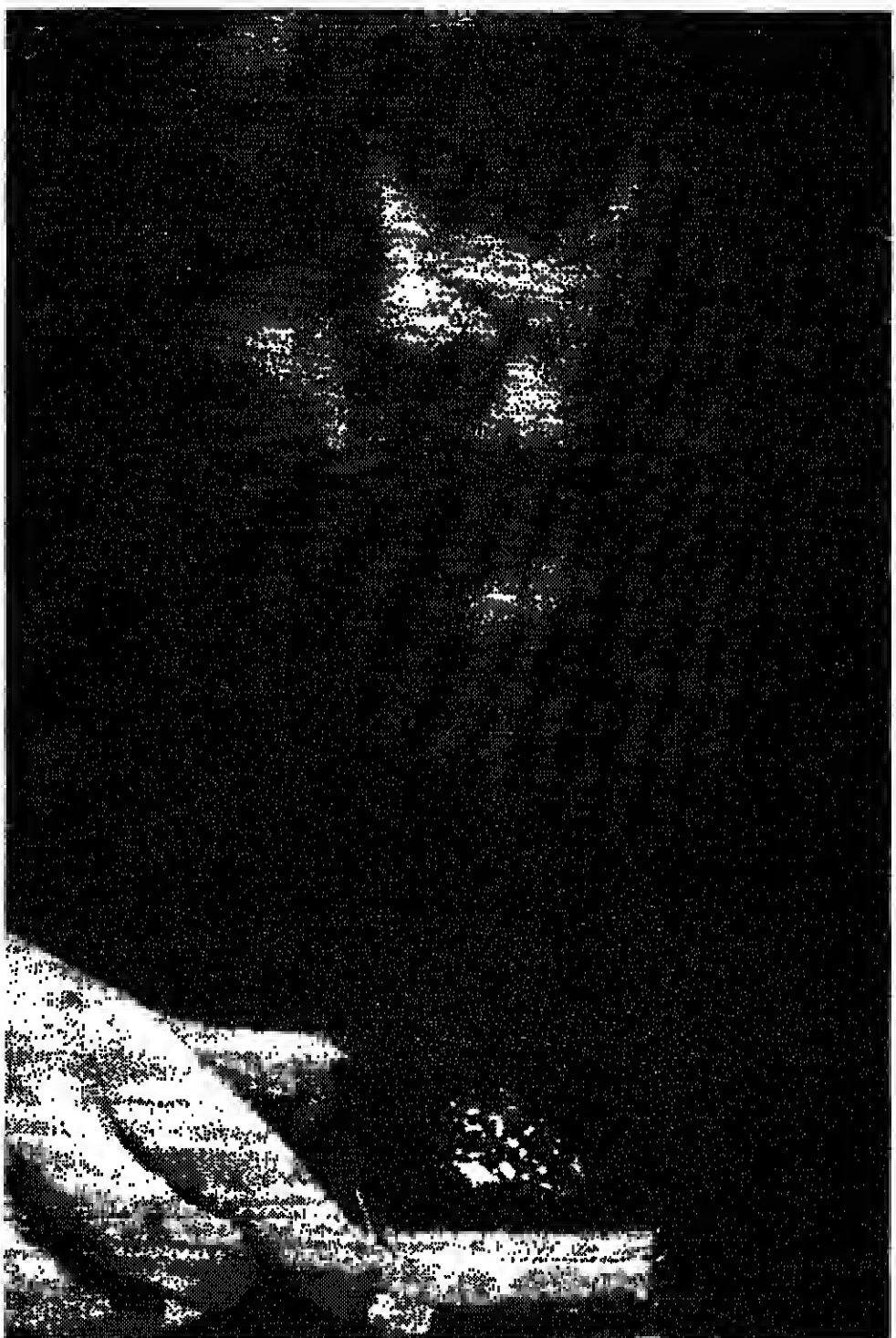
Israeli polishers are trying to boost imports from countries like Angola, Liberia, Congo, Brazil and Russia.

Mr. Rutlinger said many of

these places had not been aware of Israel's prominence as a diamond centre.

Israel is also working increasingly with medium-sized stones of a half to five carats, rather than for example, a tenth of a carat where it cannot compete with cheap-labour countries like India.

"Cutting small diamonds is labour intensive so it doesn't pay to cut them here," Mr. Rutlinger said.



An Israeli model displays a 58 carat diamond worth over \$400,000 at the international diamond fair in Tel Aviv where some \$300 million in gems are on display. This is the first such show organised by Israel's normally secretive diamond manufacturers, who account for half the world's polished gem-quality diamond production with exports of more than \$4.5 billion a year (Reuter photo)

DAILY BUSINESS BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Travel agents include Petra on tour of Israel

☆☆ SOME ISRAELI travel agents are marketing Petra as part of Israel in the tourism packages they organise for European, American and Asian tourist groups. According to Ali Bisheh, the regional director of the Forum hotels in the area and the general manager of the Amra Hotel, the Israeli tour and travel agencies attract foreign tourists at cheaper prices compared to those in Jordan and, through Eilat, they provide them with daily opportunities to visit Petra and return to the Israeli port city the same day. As such, foreign tourists stay in Jordan for only a few hours providing no benefit at all to Jordan's tourism sector. Fearing that this situation would become worse, Mr. Bisheh urged taking quick measures to solve this issue and proposed giving foreign tourists visiting Jordan the priority to see Petra.

Noting that the red rose city cannot absorb more than 2,000 visitors a day during peak seasons, Mr. Bisheh also proposed that local tour agents be stopped from providing facilities and services to tourists or groups coming from Israel unless their stay in Jordan is at least 24 hours. He stressed that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should intervene "so that Petra would not become a mere product to be sold to the world by Israeli tour and travel agents who would take all the benefits to themselves and no one else." In this regard, Mr. Bisheh recommended that the ministry oblige local agents to refuse any tourist group coming through Israeli agents unless the programme for the group includes staying in Jordan for a day and one night at least.

Royal Jordanian to open four offices in Israel, Palestinian self-rule areas later this month

☆☆ ROYAL JORDANIAN has announced opening an office in Tel Aviv and three offices in the Palestinian self-rule areas of Nablus, Ramallah and Gaza. The official opening of these four new offices will take place this month, Royal Jordanian President Nader Dahabi said. He added that flight and tourism services will be provided directly to the citizens in Israel after the signing of the bilateral transport agreement which is expected next week. The transport agreement with the Palestinians had been signed with other accords earlier. Mr. Dahabi indicated that after signing the agreement with the Israelis, work will begin on preparing flight schedules and points of departures and arrivals which have been specified to be Amman and Aqaba in Jordan and Tel Aviv and Eilat in Israel. He said it has been agreed to allow five regular flights for each side in addition to unscheduled or chartered flights. Flights from Royal Wings or Arab Wings may be used for the flights in addition to Royal Jordanian and El Al aircraft (Al Ra'i).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 10/01/1996				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PSC	240	55800	232.500	232.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	218	963	4.450	4.450
THE HOUSING BANK	5050	24654	4.870	4.870
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	239	667	2.820	2.800
JORDAN GULF BANK	2800	4084	1.080	1.080
JORDAN TRADING BANK	6342	23173	3.640	3.660
BUSINESS BANK	250	795	3.180	3.180
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	1000	3580	3.580	3.580
REIT LOCAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	200	632	3.210	3.250
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	10000	9790	1.000	1.000
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	1350	7412	1.410	1.370
BANKS SECTOR	33727	131628	INDEX NUMBER: 185.52	CHANGE: -0.99
ARAB UNION INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE	500	1300	2.600	2.600
INSURANCE SECTOR	500	1300	INDEX NUMBER: 130.20	CHANGE: 0.007
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	13500	23360	1.740	1.730
ARAB TELEVISION BROADCAST	300	1902	6.300	5.600
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	1350	2392	1.760	1.700
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	12750	22750	1.010	1.000
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	8200	27420	2.150	2.160
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	18913	66646	3.540	3.530
ARAB PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	7150	8775	1.220	1.240
UNIFIED CO. FOR ORGANIZING LAND TRANS.	6000	13679	2.290	2.290
UNION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	5000	5100	1.030	1.020
SERVICES SECTOR	8376	162803	INDEX NUMBER: 198.75	CHANGE: -0.054
ATTEMPT CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	500	600	1.200	1.200
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	8988	33030	3.660	3.680
THE ARAB PETROLEUM	1883	5380	5.380	5.380
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	2864	29019	10.130	10.130
JORDAN TANKING	538	3816	7.000	7.150
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	2105	7852	3.700	3.710
THE JORDAN WOODSTOCKS	1742	13359	7.700	7.700
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	1382	6072	4.380	4.420
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	100	618	6.120	6.150
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	388	913	2.350	2.360
JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD FACTORIES	200	780	3.900	3.900
ARAB AL DANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	1251	8628	7.500	7.520
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	2750	9401	5.340	5.400
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	1700	1700	1.000	1.000
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1700	2414	1.410	1.420
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	3833	6360	1.660	1.660
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	1473	1502	1.020	1.020
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1000	1610	1.610	1.610
JORDAN ROCKWELL INDUSTRIES	1650	1714	1.070	1.030
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	500	1900	3.800	3.800
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	350	613	1.760	1.740
UNIVERSAL JORDAN INDUSTRIES	14500	47133	3.250	3.250
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	4700	9200	1.960	1.960
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	4750	6629	1.400	1.400
EL-ZAY READY WEAR MANUFACTURING CO.	7373	16828	2.280	2.280
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	550	891	1.630	1.370
UNION CEMENT & VEGAN/ARAB OIL INDUSTRY	7700	12262	1.590	1.590
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	16284	226991	INDEX NUMBER: 122.45	CHANGE: +0.097
GRAND TOTAL	192679	522720	INDEX NUMBER: 154.30	CHANGE: -0.011

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Financial Markets		
In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank		
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 10/11/1996		
Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0942	1.0997
Deutsche Mark	0.4909	0.4934
Swiss Franc	0.6074	0.6104
French Franc	0.1433	0.1440
Japanese Yen	0.6742	0.6776
Dutch Guilder	0.4384	0.4406
Swedish Krona		

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES		
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.		
One U.S. dollar	1.3622/32	Canadian dollar
	1.4372/82	Deutschemarks
	1.6096/06	Dutch guilders
	1.1614/24	Swiss francs
	29.53/57	Belgian francs
	4.9242/92	French francs
	1570.4/1.9	Italian lire
	104.65/75	Japanese yen
	6.5700/00	Swedish crowns
	6.3260/10	Norwegian crowns
	5.5541/41	Danish crowns
	1.4218/28	Singapore dollars
	0.7437/42	Australian dollars
	7.7325/35	Hong Kong dollars
One sterling	\$1.5462/72	
Gold (ounce)	\$397.30/397.80	

Correction

IN THE press release entitled: "Private placement subscription opens for increasing capital of major Lebanese company" and published Wednesday Jan. 10, 1995, the Jordan Times regrets that some typographical errors have appeared in the article. The name of the projects manager at the Union Investment Corporation should have read "Yasser" instead of "Yasser." Also it was erroneously mentioned that Messrs Mazen and Marwan Salha presented control 86.49 per cent of the company when the correct sentence should have read that Messrs. Mazen and Marwan Salha presently control 86.49 per cent of the company. The figure concerning the amount of shares should have been 45,895 shares instead of 45.895. The proceeds of this private placement will go entirely to the company for the purpose of the reconstruction of the five-star hotel.

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Asian Squash Championship

Promising players set to secure bright future for Malaysia

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Malaysia's team at the 8th Asian Squash Championship includes the tournament's youngest players. Yet although their names are still relatively unknown, they might soon become the sport's well-known stars in years to come.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, the team's coach said his players included 15-year-old Ong Beng Hee the winner of the just concluded prestigious British Under-16 Open and women's finalist 14-year-old Leong Siu Yan.

Jamie Hickox, a Canadian who has been in charge of Malaysia's team for the past two years, said although squash did not have a wide base in Malaysian sports it was highly regarded and enjoyed good coverage in the media.

Malaysia had finished second in the 1994 Asian championship and Hickox believes his team will retain that spot as the Pakistani team seem in a league of their own.

"We are aiming for 2nd place in the men's competition and 1st place in the women's. We hope we can achieve that."

Hickox said women's competition would have been enhanced had Japan, the Philippines and Thailand taken part. However, the teams from India and Singapore are not to be underestimated.

He also expressed his satisfaction with facilities and courts at the Al Hassan Squash Centre — the home of the competition — which was recently inaugurated by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and is regarded as the most sophisticated squash arena of the region.

Top women's seed advances as world champion Jansher Khan pulls out

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The tournament's top seeded women's player, India's Meesha Jhangir, Wednesday advanced to the semifinal round of the Asian Squash Championship after overcoming Malaysia's Sharon Wee.

Meanwhile, the tournament lost its men's top seed, world champion Jansher Khan, who forfeited his match against India's Arjan Singh.

Although it was a big disappointment for fans waiting to watch the world's top ranked player, Khan's withdrawal came as no big surprise as he was reported suffering from a nagging backache and had undergone tests Tuesday. In an earlier post-match interview, Khan had hinted he may discontinue the championship, not wishing to aggravate a possible injury that might disrupt his schedule in professional squash.

In women's matches Wednesday, Singapore's Millie Moy beat compatriot Lina Ong; Malaysia's Carrie Yeo defeated Christina Mak of Hong Kong. Rebecca Chiu of Hong Kong was playing Malaysia's Leong Siu Lynn in a late match.

In men's matches, Pakistan's Mirzaman Gul beat Jordan's Mohammad

Saeed. Pakistan's Khan brothers, Zubair and Zarak, were playing in a late match so were Kenneth Low of Malaysia and Hong Kong's Abdul Fattah Khan.

Coaches seminar begins; draw finalised

While Asian champions continued their singles matches in the competition, officials and coaches had a busy schedule of their own on the third day of the 8th Asian Squash Championships.

A coaches seminar was held by the Malaysian coach S. Maniam at Al Hassan Squash Centre Wednesday. Meanwhile, players were getting ready for the team competition which starts Saturday.

Following the meeting of the general assembly of the Asian Squash Federation, the participating delegations finally approved the draw which had been announced prior to the start of competition.

Only India voted against the previous draw which was approved with a 12-1 vote. The meeting also discussed holding the next championship in India in 1997, and pushing a proposal to include squash in the next Asian games — a motion that needs the approval and participation of 16 countries to be passed.

Five Arab countries are



among the 13 teams taking part in the competition underway. They represent Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Bahrain, Hong Kong, India, South Korea, Kuwait, Lebanon, Taiwan and Jordan.

The men's teams were divided as follows:

Group 1
Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bahrain

Group 2
Hong Kong, Kuwait, Lebanon

Group 3
Malaysia, Jordan, South Korea

Group 4
India, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Palestine

The women's teams were divided into two groups:

Group 1
Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka

Group 2
Hong Kong, Singapore, S. Korea, Lebanon

GOVERN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSHI
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AKQ32 CAQ5 A988 A75

As dealer, what action do you take?

Q. 2 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

AAKJ105 CKQ5 054 AKJ8

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1A 20 Pass Pass

7 What action do you take?

Q. 3 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AK62 CAJ96 0K9 A9752

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

1A Pass 10 Pass

27 Pass 7

What do you bid now?

Q. 4 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:

AAK10632 0743 0Void A64

Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?

Q. 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

AAJ83 CA43 0J92 A962

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST

1NT Pass 7

What do you bid now?

Q. 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

AKQJ743 08 0Void AAKQ106

Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

11 cities bid for 2004 Summer Games

LAUSANNE (R) — Eleven cities submitted bids to host the 2004 Summer Games before a mid-

night deadline, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said on Wednesday.

The list was: Athens, Buenos Aires, Cape Town, Istanbul, the French city of Lille, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, San Juan, Seville of Spain, Stockholm and Russia's St. Petersburg.

IOC officials said technical representatives of the bidding cities would meet IOC leaders in Lausanne on January 23 to discuss bidding procedure.

The cities have to submit full bid documents to the IOC by mid-August after which an evaluation commission chaired by German IOC member Thomas Bach will visit the candidate cities.

The commission will publish its report by the end of February 1996 and an IOC electoral college will whittle down the candidates to a shortlist of four or five by early April.

After that the IOC's 100-plus members will be invited on expenses-paid inspection visits to the remaining candidate cities before making their choice in Lausanne on September 5.

With Beijing, still smarting over its narrow defeat by Sydney in the race to host the 2000 Summer Games, not a candidate, the field appears to be wide open.

Cape Town, bidding to bring the Olympics to Africa for the first time, is seen as the sentimental favourite.

Kjus hopes shattered by crash

KITZBUHEL, Austria (AFP) — Lasse Kjus of Norway may have lost this year's World Cup after being concussed in a bad fall in downhill training here Wednesday.

A dozen skiers crashed before organisers called off practice for this weekend's Hahnenkamm classic on the notorious Streif piste.

Hospital consultant Gunther Schwentner said the Norwegian's life was not threatened but he would have a brain scan on Thursday.

The Norwegian team said it was too early to put a date on a comeback but hoped Kjus would be fit to race in the world championships in Sierra Nevada in February.

Kjus, who skies cautiously in training since a fall during practice in Chile in 1991 killed a nerve in his right shoulder, had won three and been runner-up in five races this season to take a commanding lead in the World Cup.

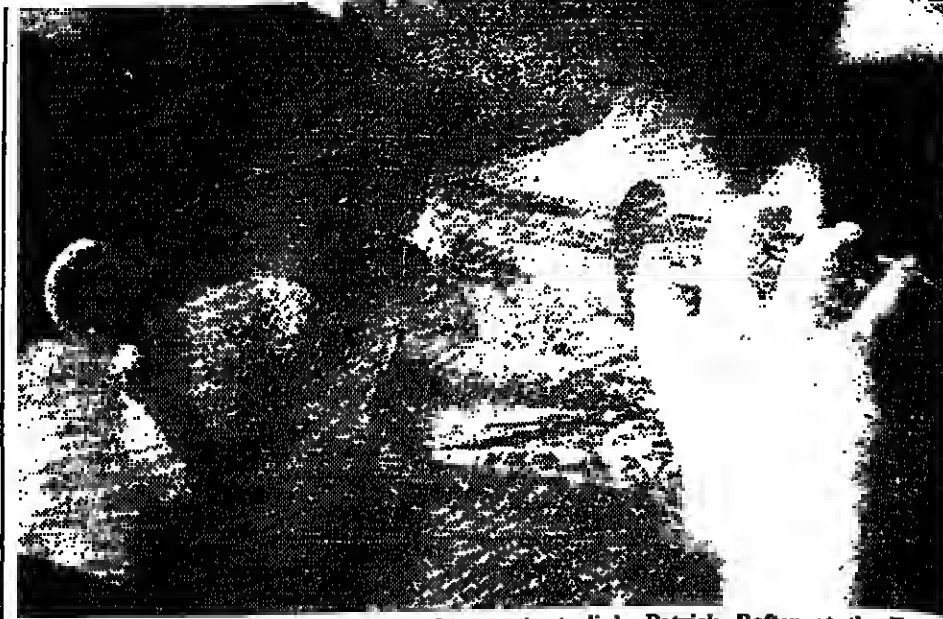
He won his first downhill at Bormio, Italy, in December — the last downhill to have been raced this season.

Kjus, 25, on Sunday, fell when he lost control as he came off the Hausbergkante jump 500m from the finish line.

Austrian Andreas Schifferer and Markus Fisser of Liechtenstein were also detained in hospital. Schifferer was also concussed.

Canadian Brian Stemmler, who almost killed himself in a terrible fall here in 1989, said the course was too dangerous.

"How could they not realise that jump was going to throw the skiers off line," he said.



Andre Agassi of the U.S. drinks ice water from a jug during his first round match against Australia's Patrick Rafter at the Kooyong Classic in Melbourne (Reuters photo)

Agassi: Too much pressure on players

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Andre Agassi on Wednesday condemned the pressure that countries put on their emerging players after being given a tough time by Australia's fallen hero Patrick Rafter.

The world number two needed three tie-breaks to beat Rafter 7-6 (7-4), 6-7 (6-8), 7-6 (7-5) on the opening day of the eight-player Colonial Classic at Kooyong W.

His match against Rafter 12 months ago at the Australian Open was hyped to unrealistic levels. The young Australian then crashed out of the fourth round centre court encounter in straight sets.

Rafter has endured a nightmare year since then, his world ranking free-falling from 21 to 68. His confidence has been shattered by Australia's desperate search for a great new tennis hope.

Agassi said the pressure was "ridiculous."

"You come here and you get it (pressure) with Australian players, you go to England and you get it with the English players and in France it's pretty much the same thing," Agassi said.

"I think it's a bit unfair to the players who are having the pressure put on them."

Asked if he had that problem, the 25-year-old Agassi said: "There is a difference between hype and expectation. When I play the U.S. Open the U.S. crowd expects me to win."

"It's a little different when you've won a few Grand Slams and when the crowd is putting the pressure on you to live up to something."

Rafter, recovering from an operation last October on his right wrist, said it had been "fantastic to go out on the court and play freely."

He held two match points on Agassi in the 10th game of the final set.

Rafter is relieved the glare of expectation has now passed to Mark Philippoussis. He said his performance against Agassi had given him some confidence for next week's Grand Slam.

"Considering the way I've been feeling about my game I guess I surprised myself," he said.

"Andre wasn't 100 per cent, he wasn't sharp the

whole time, he had his lapses, but at the same time it does make you feel pretty good to come within one point of the match."

"I was nice to go out there today and play Andre without any of that hype."

Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who believes his best chance of winning Grand Slam is in the Australian U.S. Open, defeated Dutchman Richard Krajicek 6-3, 6-4.

"I like where I am... in the world's top ten and my goal this year is to win at least one of the Grand Slams," said the world number six.

Kafelnikov, who won his eighth career title in the Australian Hardcourt final in Adelaide last Sunday, said: "I am fit for the Grand Slam, seven matches, best of five sets... I feel like I am ready."

Jim Courier, who won the Australian Open in 1992 and 1993, beat South Africa's Wayne Ferreira 6-1, 3-6, 6-2. Ferreira was playing with a broken finger on his right service hand.

Michael Chang, the second seed, beat Stefan Edberg in the day's final match 6-2, 6-7 (3/7), 6-4.

Sampras says he is vulnerable in Australia

MELBOURNE (Agencies) — World number one Pete Sampras said on Wednesday a recent bout of influenza left him vulnerable to a possible early exit at next week's Australian Open.

Sampras, whose preparations for this year's first Grand Slam event have been disrupted by the illness, arrived in Melbourne on Wednesday and headed immediately to Flinders Park for a practice session on centre court.

"In the first round I'm going to feel a little bit vulnerable because I have not played a lot of matches recently. We will just have to see what happens," Sampras told reporters later.

"Hopefully I will get through the first round and play myself into shape."

The American Davis Cup player said the illness forced him to withdraw from a warm-up exhibition event in Melbourne which began on Wednesday.

"Probably I was in a little bit better shape physically coming down here last year," he said, referring to his preparations for the 1995 Australian Open. He lost in the final that year to fellow American Andre Agassi.

Sampras said he was disappointed to miss this week's warm-up Colonial classic in Melbourne, adding that event organisers refused his request for a one-off warm-up match.

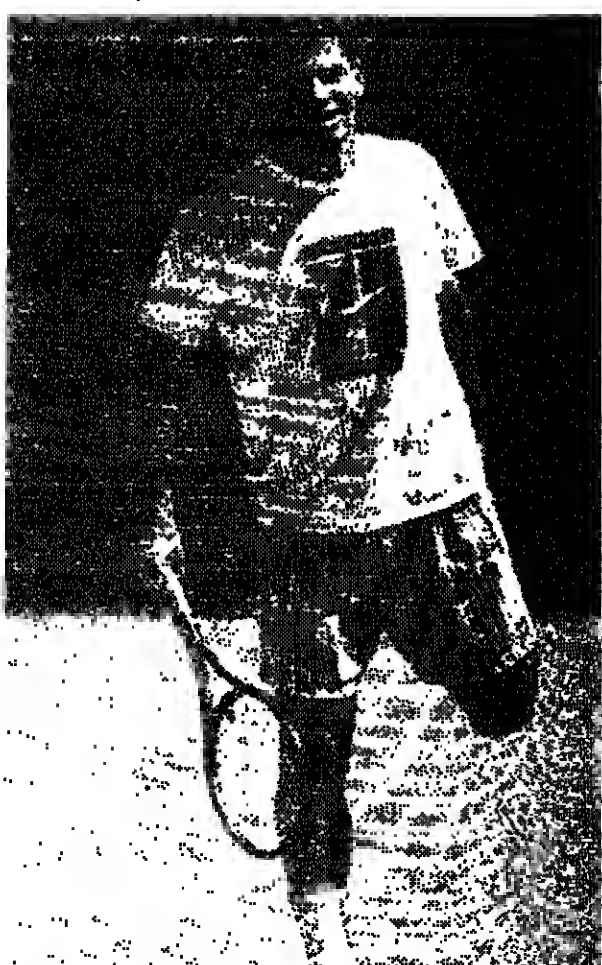
"I did ask if I could have a game against anyone on Friday but they (event organisers) did not want that," he said.

"I would have been nice to play a couple of matches," he added.

Sampras said he would work on his fitness and stamina before the Australian Open starts on Monday.

"There is not a lot of time but hopefully there is enough for me to do well. I will try to get as much court time as possible," said Sampras, visibly jet-lagged after his flight from the United States.

"Hopefully I'll be going for



World No. 1 Pete Sampras of the U.S. goes through some stretching exercises on the centre court at Melbourne's National Tennis Centre soon after his arrival in Australia for next week's Australian Open (Reuters photo)

some runs to get back a little of the conditioning I lost because of (the illness) last week."

Sampras said he suffered a slight fever after catching the flu early last week.

"After a few days I felt a bit better and decided to do some training but then it kind of hit me again," he said.

"Flying across the world feeling that way was not the best way to try and get my health back so I put the travel back a few days."

Top seed out of New Zealand Open

In Auckland, top seed Thomas Enqvist of Sweden

was knocked out of the New Zealand Open men's tennis tournament in the second round on Wednesday, beaten 7-5, 6-4 by Peruvian Jaime Yzaga.

Yzaga won the event in 1992 but had a poor 1995 and had to qualify for this year's tournament.

Enqvist, ranked seventh in the world and the defending champion, said he did not know what happened.

"This is probably my worst match in a very long time. The Swede said, 'I don't know what happened. I just couldn't hit the ball. I didn't serve well. I had a lot of double faults.'"

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	Pierce Brosnan as James Bond 007 in GOLDENEYE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:05, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.	Sylvester Stallone in JUDGE DREDD (Time) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 DANGEROUS MINDS Show: 5 p.m.	CONCORD "1" DISCLOSURE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" * Batman For ever Shows: 3:30, 8:30 * ASSASSINS Shows: 6, 10:30	Nabielah Oubed / Farrouq Feeshawi .. In Atabeh Al Sattat (Lovers Step) Show: 8:30	Nabielah Oubed / Farrouq Feeshawi .. In Atabeh Al Sattat (Lovers Step) Show: 8:30	Theplay "Ahlan Tatbie" Welcome Normalisation Shows: 8:30 p.m. For reservation call 625155	

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Santos, Botafogo reach Brazilian final

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Santos gave a performance reminiscent of the club's great days as they overcame a three-goal deficit against Fluminense on Sunday to reach the final of the Brazilian championship where they will face Botafogo.

Santos, beaten 4-1 in the first leg of their semifinal on Thursday, hammered Fluminense 5-2 to level the aggregate score at 6-6 and qualify on having the better overall record in the competition.

Botafogo went through on the same criteria after drawing 0-0 at home to Cruzeiro following a 1-1 draw in the first leg.

Santos striker Giovanni produced another virtuoso performance for his team, scoring the first two goals and providing the passes for the other three.

His 25th minute penalty followed by a superb goal from the edge of the penalty area four minutes later put Santos back in the tie.

The two teams, playing with the verve and style for which Brazilian soccer is famous, provided an enthralling game as they left aside the violence and petulance which often mars the country's domestic football.

Striker Macedo gave Santos a three-goal advantage in the 51st minute after Giovanni's pass but one minute later Fluminense substitute Rogerinho headed in a rebound to put his team back in front on aggregate.

Santos had the advantage again 10 minutes later when Giovanni sped to the byline and crossed for Camandocia to make it 4-1. In the 83rd minute he set up the fifth goal for Marcelo Passos with a Cheeky Backheel.

Rogerinho pulled another goal back one minute later but Fluminense were unable to complete a comeback. "Giovanni was exceptional," said Fluminense's beaten coach Joel Santana.

Santos became famous during the 17 years which Pele spent with them but have not won a trophy since 1984. Pele is now a member of the club board and visited the team hotel before the game. His son Edinho is the team's regular goalkeeper.

Fluminense had reached the semifinals with a modest squad who were involved in a long-running dispute with the club's administration, who they claimed were paying their wages two months late.

Cowboys defeated as coach's call backfires

PHILADELPHIA (R) — A questionable call by Dallas coach Barry Switzer backfired Sunday, opening the door for a 42-year field goal by Gary Anderson with 86 seconds left that lifted the Philadelphia Eagles past the Cowboys 20-17.

Switzer elected to go for a first down on fourth-and-1, into the wind at the Cowboys' 29. Emmitt Smith's run into the middle was stopped for no gain but referees blew the whistle for the two-minute warning prior to the snap.

Switzer left his offence on the field and ran the same play and Smith was stuffed again. Philadelphia ran three plays that gained four yards, then Anderson kicked the game-winner.

"I knew we weren't going to win the ball game if we didn't make the plays," said Switzer.

"Yes, I would agree about the decision on going for it again," said owner Jerry Jones, whose Cowboys were upset last week by Washington. "We usually make those kinds of plays."

Philadelphia (9-5) moved within one game of first-place Dallas (10-4) in the NFC East. Despite the loss, Dallas clinched a playoff berth when Chicago and St. Louis lost.

Ricky Watters continued his dominant play for the Eagles. He carried 33 times for 112 yards and a touchdown and added six receptions. Smith gained 108 yards on 27 carries including one touchdown run that left him one rushing touchdown shy of tying John Riggins' NFL mark of 24 for a season.

At Carolina, Steve Young threw two touchdown passes and ran for another score as the sizzling San Francisco 49ers won some revenge with a 31-10 romp over the Carolina Panthers.

The 49ers (10-4) have won five successive games to tie Dallas for the best record in the NFC and grab the inside track for home-field advantage throughout the playoffs. The Niners win the tiebreaker since they beat Dallas last month.

The Niners have not lost since a stunning 13-7 home setback against Carolina on November 5.

In Atlanta, Morten Andersen kicked four field goals — including a pair of team-record 55-yarders — as the Atlanta Falcons beat the New Orleans Saints 19-14. Andersen hit field goals of 25, 51 and 55 yards in the first half as the Falcons (8-6) took a 9-0 halftime lead. He added a late 55-yarder to become the first NFL kicker to boot three field goals of 50 yards or more in one game.

"I think I would have made the last 55-yarder even if it wasn't New Orleans, but it was a motivating factor," said Andersen, who played 13 seasons with New Orleans (6-8).



Washington Redskins tight end Jamie Asher (84) flips over New York Giants safety Vencie Glenn after catching a pass from quarterback Heath Shuler in the first period of their NFL game (Reuters photo)



Denver Broncos linebacker Simon Fletcher (73) sacks Seattle Seahawks quarterback Rick Mirer for a sixteen yard loss during the first quarter in Denver (Reuters photo)

In Cincinnati, Jeff Blake passed for 253 yards and a touchdown and Doug Pelfrey kicked three field goals as the Cincinnati Bengals beat the Houston Oilers 24-17. Quarterback Steve McNair drove the Oilers to the Detroit 5 late in the last quarter but was intercepted by Mike Johnson.

In Houston, Scott Mitchell threw two touchdown passes to Herman Moore as the charging Detroit Lions survived a late scare to defeat the Houston Oilers 24-17.

NFL RESULTS			
Atlanta	19	New Orleans	14
San Francisco	31	Carolina	10
Cincinnati	16	Chicago	10
Detroit	24	Houston	17
Indianapolis	41	Jacksonville	31
New England	31	NY Jets	28
Philadelphia	20	Dallas	17
Buffalo	45	St. Louis	27
Seattle	31	Denver	27
NY Giants	20	Washington	13
Pittsburgh	29	Oakland	10
Tampa Bay	13	Green Bay	10 (OT)

World Cup draw enough to delight Mona Lisa

PARIS (R) — The Mona Lisa's enigmatic smile may just be transformed into the broadest of grins if Italy avoid the twin traps of Croatia and Yugoslavia when the draw for the 1998 World Cup qualifiers is made in the Louvre on Tuesday.

The majestic surroundings of the world's most famous museum are an unlikely setting for a strange soccer ritual assembling people from each corner of the globe to witness 190 hollow balls being plucked from goldfish bowls.

But the football fortunes of 162 nations baog in the balance and it is not that far-fetched to speculate that world peace may do too, given the passions the game can arouse.

A war once broke out between Honduras and El Salvador over a World Cup qualifier and the entry of the five nations making up the former Yugoslav republic give rise to fears of what could happen if certain of them are drawn against each other.

Thanks to the ranking system used in the draw, two

former world champions, Italy and England, could end up in the same qualifying group as both Croatia and Yugoslavia with only one of them guaranteed a place in the 32-nation finals in France.

Croatia and Yugoslavia are both placed in low-seeded pools from which the draw is made and the groups they each end up in will almost certainly be the toughest of all.

The European section of the draw, creating a mad scramble for the 14 places available in the finals, will inevitably provide the most cut-throat competition.

For once, South America are uninvolved in the draw at all as Brazil have already qualified as champions, alongside hosts France, and the other nine nations of the continent will play in a mini-championship against each other with the top four travelling to France.

Africa, the rising power-house of the game and with two extra places this time for a total of five, will also attract a lot of interest though this is diminished a little because

continental champions Nigeria, three-times World Cup finalists Cameroon and Egypt all have byes into the second round.

Asia and the Oceania and North American confederations each have three places at stake with the Asians earning a fourth if the eventually a playoff with the best team emerging from Oceania.

Europe's system of nine groups of either five or six teams has given rise to justifiable fears that some top nations may fall by the wayside as only group winners are certain of qualifying.

The best of the second-placed teams will also fight a finals berth but the other eight group runners-up will be involved in do-or-die play-offs from which only four will emerge.

For that reason, the nine top seeds — Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden and Romania — will be anxious to avoid England, Portugal and Belgium of the second seeds, Croatia of the third and Yugoslavia of the fourth.

Williams wait for official Senna report

LONDON (AFP) — Formula One team Williams declared on Sunday that it was too soon to comment on claims that Ayrton Senna's death was caused by a faulty steering rod.

The Didcot-based outfit reacted to a report in Sunday's News of the World which said the Brazilian died because the rod had been "badly welded together."

Three times world champion Senna died after smashing into a concrete wall at 190 miles per hour during the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola in April last year.

But Williams' technical director Patrick Head said: "The findings of the investigation into Ayrton's fatal accident are being considered by the magistrate, Maurizio Passarini."

"The comments published today are unofficial. We are currently awaiting Mr. Passarini's official report and cannot make any further comment until this has been published."

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The Train Ride raised a total of JD 10,000 and the Raft Race raised a total of JD 4,000. The cheque was proudly presented to Princess Majda Raad by Mr. Richard Lyon, the General Manager of the Amman Marriott Hotel.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Ripken SI sportsman of the year

NEW YORK (R) — Cal Ripken Jr., baseball's ultimate ironman, was named "Sportsman of the Year" by Sports Illustrated magazine on Sunday. The 35-year-old Ripken broke Lou Gehrig's "unbreakable" record of 2,130 consecutive games played during the 1995 season, while helping to rebuild baseball's broken relationship with its fans following the strike of 1994. The Baltimore Orioles all-star shortstop played in his 2,131st straight game on Sept. 6 to break one of the most prestigious records in sports and concluded the season with a total of 2,153 consecutive games. Other finalists for the award were Houston Rockets centre Hakeem Olajuwon, San Francisco 49ers quarterback Steve Young, Wimbledon and U.S. Open winner Pete Sampras and Connecticut women's basketball star Rebecca Lobo.

German soccer hit by withdrawals

BONN (R) — German soccer coach Bert Vogts, with many of his regular players hit by injury, on Sunday called up to uncapped players from this season's surprise team Hansa Rostock for next Friday's friendly against South Africa. Creative midfielder Stefan Beinlich and defender Rene Schneider were both included in the 17-man squad for the match which will be played in Johannesburg. It was just recognition for Rostock, well-placed in the Bundesliga and battling for a place in Europe after winning promotion last season. Seven first choice players, Heiko Herrlich, Matthias Sammer, Mario Basler, Oliver Kahn, Thomas Strunz, Markus Babel and Mehmet Scholl, all withdrew through injury or illness.

China mulling 2004 Olympic bid

BEIJING (R) — Beijing, a narrow loser to Sydney in bidding to host the 2000 Summer Olympics, will decide by mid-January whether to seek the 2004 Games, Chinese sporting officials said on Monday. "It has not been decided. We are still considering whether to host or not to host the 2004 Olympics," Chinese Olympic Committee spokesman Lu Kewen said. The International Olympic Committee reported at the weekend in Switzerland that China's capital was not among 10 cities that had already applied or were known to be planning bids. The Chinese spokesman insisted that Beijing should not be counted out for 2004.

Ukraine coaches to be replaced

KIEV (R) — The coaches of Ukraine's national and Olympic soccer teams will be replaced after failing to qualify for the European and Olympic championships, the Ukrainian football federation said on Monday. "Their duties ended after the qualifying cycle for the European Championship," federation secretary general Mykola Chernysh said. "A council of coaches will decide on replacements." National coach Anatoly Konkov resigned after Ukraine finished out of the running for the 1996 European Championship in England, he said. "Unfortunately Konkov's health is weak and he wrote a letter of resignation. But the real reason he's leaving is that we had not expected the sides would fare so badly. Our potential was much better," Chernysh said. Olympic coach Viktor Kolotov led the team to a disappointing second place in their qualifying group, although they had been the favourites.

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in
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the Throne of Egypt
(Arabic)

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

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Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi
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هنا نحن الأصل

Afro-Arab Parliamentary Dialogue ends Parliamentarians call for enhancement of democracy

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Parliamentarians from the Arab World and Africa Wednesday ended a 3-day conference by calling for the enhancement of democracy and human rights as means of solving conflicts facing their developing countries.

At the end of their conference the Afro-Arab Parliamentary Dialogue, the parliamentarians pointed to the role of parliament in putting the right mechanisms to settle differences in the two regions but stressed that conflicts would still persist if authoritarian and undemocratic regimes continue to dominate.

These conflicts are based on undemocratic practices such as the seizure of power by force, the conference's final communiqué said. The corruption of some regimes and the absence of democracy and public freedoms... are elements that contribute to increasing conflicts.

"Parliament is one of the basic institutions that contribute to solving most of the conflicts... therefore, parliamentarians are called upon to lay the foundations of real democracies that are based on human rights, public freedoms, and pluralism," the communiqué said.

The final recommendations of the conference are based on proposals filed by representatives of the 33 participating countries, to become a recommendation in the final communiqué, the proposal had to be approved by at least two-thirds of the countries present at the conference.

Most of the invited countries were present at the conference that started its meetings at Parliament on Monday. Kuwait did not attend.

In a press conference held at the end of the dialogue's meetings, Speaker of the Jordan's Lower House of

Parliament and President of the conference Sa'ad Hayel Srour described the meeting as successful, especially since it took a unanimous decision to apply for membership of the International Parliamentary Union.

"Becoming a member helps us address our issues internationally," Mr. Srour said.

Jordan will continue to be chairman of the Afro-Arab Dialogue — which has now become the Afro-Arab Parliamentary Conference — for two years until the conference elects a successor in its next meeting expected to be held in Benin in 1998.

Senator Jawad Anani, the conference's rapporteur stressed on the need to activate the Arab-African dialogue and pointed out that the conference decided to amend its bylaws for this purpose.

The complaints filed by the Syrian and Lebanese delegations over the definition of terrorism were, according to head of the Syrian delegation Ismail Abdul Ghani, finally taken into consideration in the final communiqué. The Syrian delegation had earlier called for distinguishing between terrorism in general and the people's right to resist occupation.

"We are pleased with the final outcome," Mr. Ghani told the Jordan Times after the copy of the final communiqué was made available.

The Yemeni delegation who wanted to see a condemnation of the Eritrea for occupying Hanish Island last month, was finally satisfied with the outcome.

"It is not up to our expectations but you cannot get everything you want," Ali Abhad, the head of the Yemeni delegation to the conference said.

In the final communiqué the parliamentarians proposed that they cooperate making Africa and the

Middle East free from nuclear arms and other weapons mass destruction. They also called for mitigating the consequences of the application of the General Agreement of Trade and Tariffs on the economies of Africa and Arab countries.

The conference also called for "the necessity to lift the unjust embargo imposed on Libya, particularly in light of the positive initiatives taken by Libya to solve the issue through peaceful means and within the framework of the respect for its sovereignty and in line with international legitimacy."

It also praised "the endeavours exerted for the establishment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East."

They hoped that talks on the Syrian and the Lebanese tracks would lead to the implementation of the relative resolutions of international legitimacy including the complete withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. The parliamentarians also confirmed "the Arab identity of Jerusalem and the rejection of any attempt that is aimed at affecting political, geographical or demographic changes which affect its final status and the rejection of the U.S. Congress resolution to transfer the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem by the year 1999."

On the conflict between Yemen and Eritrea, the conference reaffirmed the principle of the inadmissibility of the occupation of territories by force and calling upon the two parties to restore the status quo ante before Dec. 1995 and to begin negotiations to solve the crisis by peaceful means.

The conference also called for the lifting of "economic embargo, and alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people in light of international legitimacy."



KING HUSSEIN VISITS WOUNDED SOLDIER: His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday talks to Jordanian Army Sergeant Nahil Al Omari (L) while Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres (R) looks on. Sgt. Al Omari was wounded while on duty with U.N. forces in Bosnia and is now undergoing special treatment in the neurosurgery department at the Ichilov hospital (Reuters photo)

Group of 77 meeting concludes, stresses importance of economic cooperation

By Ghaffar Alul
and Lulu Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The 8th Asian Ministerial Meeting for the Group of 77 Wednesday adopted the final Amman Declaration for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 9) to be held in South Africa in April.

The meeting also approved a ministerial statement for economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) as well as the agenda of UNCTAD 9.

During the two-day meeting which brought together 46 Asian countries and 26 United Nations bodies, ministers stressed the need for sustainable growth and development among Asian countries especially developing nations, urging them to benefit from opportunities created by globalisation and liberalisation.

They also called on the developed countries to

assist developing nations to expand their industries as well as enhance their competitiveness in global trading.

The long-awaited Amman Declaration said that for developing countries to effectively participate and integrate into the international trading system, the industrial world should extend appropriate technical assistance to countries.

It also noted that these nations should be given every opportunity to have access to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on terms suited to their development needs.

Addressing unemployment, the document stress the importance of the role that medium and small-size enterprises can play in creating employment opportunities and in upgrading skills through the on the job-training of workers with limited experience.

The declaration urged the industrial north to provide

poor countries with environmentally sound technology as well as new and additional financial transfers.

There is a "close link between ecological sustainability and eradication of poverty on the one hand and rationalisation of consumption patterns in developed countries on the other," the declaration said.

The document recommended that a global reduction strategy should address official, bilateral, multilateral and commercial debts.

The declaration noted an imbalance and unfairness in the present world trade system and urged the countries of the north not to resort to measures that could in effect limit the trading opportunities of developing countries.

Pointing to the continued use of coercive economic measures against developing countries, through trade sanctions that contradict with international law, the

declaration "objected to the attempts aimed at extrajudicial application of domestic law, which constituted a flagrant violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and of the (WTO) rules."

On this issue, a conference source told the Jordan Times that Iraq had requested the inclusion of an article in the declaration that would urge the international community to lift the economic embargo imposed against it since its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. But, its request faced strong objection from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman, the source said.

However, another official source explained that such a request could not have been met, because UNCTAD is a United Nations body.

"The article (on Iraq sanctions) should not contradict with UN security resolutions," the official said.

Continued on Page 7

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arafat arrives in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian President Liamine Zerroul met Wednesday with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat who arrived earlier in the Algerian capital, officials said here. Mr. Arafat told journalists after the talks he had informed Mr. Zerroul of latest developments in the autonomous Palestinian territories, where elections are due to take place Jan. 20. Mr. Arafat added the polls, in which Algeria is to act as an observer, would provide "the essential basis for the establishment of a Palestinian state."

Iran's opposition withdraws candidates

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's main liberal opposition group said on Wednesday it would not present candidates in the country's legislative elections in March because of pressure from the government. The Liberation Movement of Iran (LMI), an illegal but tolerated group representing Islamic moderates, said authorities banned a press conference it had arranged for Wednesday to introduce its candidates. In a statement received by AFP, LMI leaders denounced the ban, saying they could not field any candidates for the election "under the present conditions."

Israeli singer can visit Yemen without passport

SANAA (AFP) — Israeli singer Ofra Haza has been invited to perform in Yemen but only if she leaves her Israeli passport at home. Yemen's Foreign Minister Abdel Karim Al Iryani said Wednesday, Haza, who is of Yemeni origin, has said she would like to become the first Israeli citizen to visit Yemen. The two countries are officially in a state of war. Mr. Iryani said: "I have contacted the singer to get her to come to Yemen, her country of origin, but on condition that she has a (temporary) entry permit" issued by the Yemeni authorities. "She will not be able to come with her Israeli passport."

Israel studies Norwegian compensation claim

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has asked a lawyer to study the compensation claims of a Norwegian woman whose husband was mistakenly killed by Israeli security agents 23 years ago, a government statement said Wednesday. It said Israel was not admitting responsibility for the killing which has strained otherwise close relations with Norway. The office of Mr. Peres said he had asked attorney Amnon Goldenberg to make contact with the lawyers representing Bouchiki's relatives to verify their financial claims.

U.N. to finance Morocco's human rights education

RABAT (R) — A U.N. human rights body have agreed to partially finance an eight-year human rights education programme in Morocco, a Moroccan minister said on Wednesday. "The U.N. under-secretariat in charge of human rights agreed to send a delegation of experts to examine ways of partially financing the eight-year education project in Morocco," Human Rights Minister Mohamed Ziane said. Last month, Morocco announced that human rights education would be part of the national curriculum in schools and colleges by 1998.

Erbakan to take a week to find coalition partner

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's Islamist Prime Minister-Designate Necmettin Erbakan said Wednesday that he gives himself about one week to find a partner party to form a coalition government.

"I will meet with leaders of all parties represented in parliament in the coming days and I think coalition talks will last about a week," Mr. Erbakan told a news conference here after a meeting of senior

officials of his Welfare Party, main winners in Turkey's legislative election last month.

Political analysts say eyes will be on Mr. Erbakan's Saturday meeting with conservative Motherland Party Chairman Mesut Yilmaz, the only leader who has not ruled out an alliance with the Welfare.

"We will make every effort to form a government, but if we can't, we will even be stronger in

opposition," Mr. Erbakan said.

He said he will visit caretaker Prime Minister Tansu Ciller in her True Path Party headquarters Thursday morning in his first meeting. After Saturday's meeting with Mr. Yilmaz, he will also come together with leaders of two smaller left-wing parties early next week.

"If we come out with a generally positive result from meetings with any of

the parties, we will have a second round of talks for coalition details," Mr. Erbakan said.

The Welfare Party has 158 seats in the 550-seat parliament and needs a partner to reach an absolute majority of 276 deputies. The Welfare and the Motherland together have 290 seats.

However, political analysts suggest that some liberal Motherland deputies might quit the party, if Mr. Yilmaz agrees

on a coalition with the Islamists.

President Suleyman Demirel on Tuesday appointed Mr. Erbakan prime minister-designate as he leads the largest party in parliament.

If Mr. Erbakan fails, Ms. Ciller is expected to try her chances for a center-right coalition government with the Motherland and one of the left-wing parties.

Bosnians angered by tram attack

SARAJEVO (R) — NATO's cautious response to a lethal Serb grenade attack in Sarajevo angered Bosnians who cast doubt on alliance peacekeeping on Wednesday while Serbs dug up their dead before evacuating the city.

An anti-tank rocket which hit a tram Tuesday, killing a middle-aged woman and wounding six people, reawakened the Bosnian capital's siege mentality.

It also appeared to rule out any Sarajevo visit at the weekend by U.S. President

Bill Clinton when he inspects U.S. troops serving with the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) in north Bosnia.

Even before the tram attack, security officials believed that protecting Mr. Clinton, who would have had to cross Serb lines either by air or armoured car, would be a nightmare.

NATO, also struggling with an outbreak of Muslim-Croat violence in the southern city of Mostar and plans by 70,000 Serbs to flee Sarajevo, defended the performance of its mission.

"IFOR will not be knocked

off its stride," NATO spokesman Mark Rayner told reporters in the Bosnian capital.

The tram attack revived the war psychosis which gripped Sarajevo under 3-1/2 years of siege by the Bosnian Serbs but waned under a ceasefire begun last October.

Trams continued to trundle past the spot on sniper alley where Tuesday's attack happened but people on their way to work on Wednesday morning hurried through the streets fearfully and crossed them at a crouching run.

Court trying Shbeilat turns down motion of disqualification

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The State Security Court turned down a motion filed by the defence team of Leith Shbeilat, the president of the Engineers Association, held on charges of slandering the King, the Queen the Crown Prince to disqualify the court's judges.

The motion said the court's three judges, who were appointed last month, were disqualified to rule in Mr. Shbeilat's case. Jawad Yunis, Mr. Shbeilat's lawyer, said he has grounds to doubt the integrity of the judges and to call for their dismissal. He did not elaborate.

The court was formed last month by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. It is presided by Judge Muhammad Shara'a, president of the 17th Court of First Instance, Jalal Issa, a judge at the Amman Court of First Instance and Mohammad Sa'ed, president of the Jericho Court of First Instance.

The defence attorneys said that despite the State Security Court's rejection of the

motion, they will contest it at the Court of Cassation and the Court of First Instance too.

The trial was adjourned until Jan. 14. The court is expected to look into another request filed by Mr. Yunis to meet with his client in seclusion.

On Wednesday's session, Mr. Yunis also filed a demand to free Mr. Shbeilat on bail. He had already filed several requests since his client was ordered detained on Dec. 9 but all were turned down, he said.

The four charges against Mr. Shbeilat based on interviews and lectures he gave last year. The charges include in addition to slandering Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, distributing statements that are considered offensive to Their Majesties, inciting ethnic conflict, propagating fabricated news that would lead to a devaluation of the Jordanian dinar and shaking confidence in the state's currency.

The charges carry a maximum sentence of three years.

COLUMN 8000000

Man found guilty of stalking Madonna

LOS ANGELES (R) — A man who stalked pop star Madonna and threatened to slice her throat "from ear to ear" if she did not marry him was convicted on a five counts. A jury four drifter Robert Dewe Hoskins guilty of one count of stalking Madonna, three of making threats against her and one of assaulting her bodyguard at the pop star's Hollywood estate. He faces up to 10 years in prison.

Supreme Court rejects boxer Mike Tyson's appeal

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Supreme Court rejected an appeal by former world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson seeking to overturn his 1992 rape conviction. The 29-year-old boxer who has won two fights since his release from prison on March 25, was found guilty of raping Desiree Washington in his Indianapolis hotel room in 1991 when she was a 18-year-old beauty pageant contestant.

Balloonist starts bid to circle the earth

CHICAGO (R) — A American balloonist life off from South Dakota in pursuit of one of aviation's last great records — a manned circumnavigation of the globe. Steve Fossett 51, a Chicago securities trader, took off from a dry river bed near Rapid City, his expedition headquarters. The launch was trouble-free and Fossett headed on a wind-driven south easterly track that should take him over South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, the Carolina and then out over the Atlantic.

Branson still hopes for round- world balloon first

LONDON (R) — British tycoon Richard Branson said he was still confident of winning the race to make the first flight round the world in a balloon despite giving America rival Steve Fossett, week's start. The flamboyant founder of Virgin Atlantic Airways plans to begin his attempt on one of aviation's last great records in his Virgin global challenge from Marrakesh Morocco next week.

Romania's 'gypsy king' seeks parliamentary seat

SIBIU, Romania (R) — Romania's self-styled gypsy king has declared his candidacy for the 1996 parliamentary elections. He wants to become a senator. Cioaba, 61, told guests at his birthday party in Transylvania that he had arrived in a motorcade of Mercedes and Cadillac.

Man swallowed valium after threat to kill Keating

CANBERRA (AFP) — Man swallowed 25 valium tablets after threatening assassinate Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating, a court was told recently. Ma Joseph Johnson, 23, of Carrara, Queensland, told medical officer who examined him following his arrest that he wanted to die because he was "Satan and God to come earth and fight the war."